MESSIANIC PSALMS
And Other Sermons

By

John Stacy

Published by
J. C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS
Winona/Singapore/New Delhi

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Art Work, India
Typesetting, Singapore
Offset Printing, U.S.A.

Order From:

J. C. Choate Publications
Burton Drive
Route 2, Box 156
Winona, Mississippi 38967
Phone (601) 283-1192

About The Author

John Stacy was born on February 5, 1942, in Columbus, Ohio. After graduating from high school in 1959, Mr. Stacy served in the Navy for three and one half years. During this time, he served as a Leadership Training Instructor.

He attended Pensacola Junior College, Freed-Hardeman College, A.A., Oklahoma Christian College, B.A., Harding Graduate School, Alabama Christian School of Religion, M.A., and the International Bible Institute and Seminary, M. Th., D. Min.

He has served churches of Christ in Key West and Homestead, Florida; and in Dyer, Dyersburg, and Rutherford, Tennessee.

Mr. Stacy has preached the gospel in eleven states; Trinidad, Grenada, Antigua, Freeport, Grand Bahama in the West Indies; Germany in Europe, Ghana and Togo in Africa, and in Asia he has preached in India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines.

John Stacy is the author of six other books, Sermons On The Ten Commandments, Sermons On Heaven and Hell, Exhort Brother!, Now Abideth These Three, Citizens of Eternity, and Stacy's Sermons In Series. He is owner and operator of Stacy Publications and Book Service. He is a member of the Christian Booksellers Association.

He is married to the former Hilda Smith and has one son, John Troy II.

Preface

Not long ago, I read a conversation between a Chinese army officer and a missionary. The officer said, "You missionaries are stupid!" The missionary asked, "Why do you say that?" "Your methods." "What is wrong with our methods?"

The officer said, "Take this meeting you just finished. You had a wonderful opportunity to win a victory for your religion. But you did not take advantage of it. Now it is forever lost."

"You will never again have an opportunity to speak to this same exact audience. Why didn't you give them any literature? Then, when curiosity is awakened, they could read further about what they heard. Then your message would take effect perhaps a month or a year from now."

"We communists have been in China for less than ten years. There is no one who does not know about Stalin's name or who knows nothing about communism. What your missionaries have not been able to do in the last one hundred years, we have done in ten. We have filled China with our teaching."

"We communists have printed our message and have distributed our literature all over our land. One day we will drive you out of our land. We will do it through the printed page!"

We Christians have indeed underestimated the power of the printed page. I have learned from experience in the last few years, what the printed page can do. My books have gone where I could not go. They can wait for just the right moment to teach. The written word has a permanency which the spoken word lacks. When properly presented, truth on the printed page never changes. Writing has been a tremendous extension to my ministry. As one grows older, the spector of one's passing from the earthly scene looms larger with each passing day. As a result of this realization, there arises within me a desire to continue to preach the gospel after death. The printed page will speak long after my departure.

The author makes no claim for total originality in these sermons. Materials of all kinds have been read and consciously incorporated into these lessons. An attempt to recognize the contribution of others to these lessons will be given in a partial bibliography.

John Stacy
Oct. 29, 1982

Dedication

In Proverbs 18:24 Solomon said, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." This book is dedicated to a friend that is closer to me than a brother. He is Mike Kiser. Mike and I first met at Freed-Hardeman College in 1963. Our preaching lives have kept us in close proximity most of the time, since then.

Mike is a faithful preacher of the gospel. He is a lover of truth and a defender thereof. He has labored many years in an effort to spread the kingdom of God. He has concentrated his overseas efforts on Ghana, West Africa, where he and his family labored as missionaries. I have travelled to Ghana on two occasions to labor with brother Kiser.

Brother Kiser has a great sense of humor. He has a heart as big as Texas. He would give you the shirt off his back.

I truly love him as a friend and brother in Christ. May God bless you, Mike. My prayer is that God will give you a long and fruitful life of service in the vineyard of the Lord. I count myself most fortunate that our paths have crossed in this life and look forward to our eternal fellowship in that land that is fairer than day.

Gratitude

I wish to thank brother J. C. Choate for his interest in publishing this volume. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with one of God's greatest servants in the twentieth century. Few if any are laboring for the Lord as brother Choate. He has chosen to blanket India and Asia with radio and literature.

In my judgment he has selected the right methods. Having preached in India, Sri Lanka, and Singapore, I have been overwhelmed at how few are reached through public preaching. I realize that there are some exceptions to this and I am certainly not belittling public preaching which is my first love. However, looking at the situation as a whole, we reach few.

Brother Choate has observed that we go to India and other Asian nations and expect a great harvest of souls. He says that we are still preparing the soil! May God bless brother J. C. Choate, his family, and all the good brethren at home and overseas, who are involved in the reaching of the masses of Asia.

I am humbled to have the opportunity to work with brother Choate and to contribute in a small way to this great undertaking.

Introduction

What kind of preacher are you? What type of sermons do you preach? Do you challenge your audiences with fresh materials? Are you one who forever dwells on first principles? Perhaps you are known for going from one extreme to another.

I would hope that you are a scriptural preacher – one who loves God and the souls of men and who is dedicated to that of proclaiming the truth of God. I would also like to think that you are a humble man, that you are not one who is satisfied with your performance, but that you are ever studying and seeking means and ways to do a better job in your preaching.

The first principles of God's word are to be proclaimed, and again and again from time to time. But one should not confine himself solely to that part of the scripture. What about a little meat along the way? The New Testament is there, but also there is all of the wealth of the Old Testament to consider. We are told to proclaim the whole counsel of God.

Bro. John Stacy has prepared yet another volume of sermon outlines in series. His major themes are from both the Old and New Testaments. There are subjects on love and modern day evils. The material ranges from the cross to worship to character studies. The outlines are full and complete with supporting references. I would think that they will be well received by brethren everywhere.

Let me invite you to go through these sermon outlines and see if you don't find them to be new, fresh, and challenging in comparison to the average sermon material that you may come across. Have you preached sermons like these before? Don't you think they would be worthy of preaching?

I wouldn't ask you to take this material and preach it word for word the way it is, but I would suggest that you take these subjects, go over them in light of what God's word says, re-work the material to fit your own personality and delivery, and then try them out. If you will, I believe you will be more than pleased with the kind of results you will get from them.

J. C. Choate
Church of Christ
131 Moulmein Road
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February 3, 1983

Contents

Preface iv
Dedication. vi
Gratitude. vii
Introduction viii
Contents x

MESSIANIC PSALMS

Heavenly Derision (Psm 2) 1
Death Could Not Hold Him (Psm 16) 3
The Submissive and Sacrificial Christ (Psm 22) 6
The Shepherd Psalm (Psm 23). 8
The Obedient Son (Psm 40) 13
The Beautiful Christ and His Church (Psm 45) 16
The Reigning Christ (Psm 72) 18
Let Us Praise Him (Psm 89). 21
Our King and High Priest (Psm 110) 23
The Triumphant Messiah (Psm 118) 26

LOVE

The First and Great Commandment 31
The Royal Law 35
Loving Our Enemies 39
The Eleventh Commandment 41

WORSHIP

Worship. 45
The Collection. 48
Postscripts. 52
Singing 53
The Lord's Supper. 58
The Proclamation of The Word .63
Praying To God. 67

SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS

Father Forgive Them 72
Jesus Remember Me 76
Behold Thy Son 81
The Forsaken Christ 85
The Thirsting Christ 91
It Is Finished 95
Into Thy Hands 99

CHARACTER STUDIES

John The Baptist 103
Moses 107

David

    A Man After God's Own Heart 116
    David's Goliaths 119
    David's Greatest Sin 123
    Lessons From David's Life 126

MORAL ISSUES

Abortion 130
Homosexuality 135
Euthanasia Or Mercy Killing 141
Suicide 146
Women's Lib and Equal Rights 152
Pornography 159
Gambling 163
Captial Punishment 168
Social Drinking 172

Bibliography 178

MESSIANIC PSALMS

Heavenly Derision
(Psm 2)

Intro: 1. The second Psalm is unique among Psalms.
2. It is referred to by number in Acts 13:33.
3. Davidic authorship is confirmed by Acts 4:25.
4. It is the only Psalm that uses the phrase "Son of God."

I **The Vain Counsel Of Men** (Psm 2:1–3)

A. In these verses David carries us into the future. He sees humanity coming together. Then he asks some questions.
   1. Why do the nations rage? The nations here are the Gentiles. Rage means, "tumultuously assemble."
   2. Why do the people meditate a vain thing? The people here are the Jews. Meditate is also rendered "imagine" in some translations. It means, "to study or plan."

B. The vain things that the people were involved in were their decisions to "take counsel against Jehovah and his Annointed."
   1. Jehovah is God the Father.
   2. The Annointed is Christ or the Messiah.
   3. This vision of the future that David saw was fulfilled in Jerusalem as the people and the rulers plotted to crucify Christ. (Acts 4:27)

C. The theme of the counsel of Jew and Gentile was the breaking of the bands and the casting away of the cords. Man has always believed that God's laws were too binding or too restrictive! Not so! God's laws are given for the benefit of man.
   1. Psm 119:67, 71
   2. Psm 119:105, 111, 130, 165

II Heavenly Derision (Psm 2:4–6)

- A. In these verses were seen the omnipotent God laughing at mortal man. God is laughing at man's futile efforts to dethrone Him.
- B. Solomon has God laughing at sinful man in Proverbs 1:24–26. God will have the last laugh.
- C. But after God laughs he will speak to man in his wrath. Then God will act by vexing them with his sore displeasure. This he will do according to II Thess. 1:7–9.
- D. God will set his King on the holy hill of Zion. Man cannot stop him. What man fails to realize is that in his rebellion, he cannot stop that which has been foreordained to come to pass. (Acts 4:27–28)
  1. The word "set" means, "to offer or pour out." It refers to the cross.
  2. Jesus who is God's only begotten Son is the King. (Zech 9:9, 14:8–9, Isa 2:3, Rev 14:17)

III The Son Of God Speaks (Psm 2:7–9)

- A. The Son of God offered on Mt. Zion, the one against whom the leaders take counsel and the one whose bands they try to break assunder now speaks.
- B. He speaks of the decree that Jehovah spoke unto Him.
  1. The Father acknowledges Christ as his Son. See Rom. 1:4
  2. Christ is the "begotten" Son. See Jno 3:16.
  3. This verse is quoted in Acts 13:32–33 and in Heb 5:5.
  4. The Father says that the nations are the Christ's for the asking. The uttermost parts of the earth are his possession. Jesus in the New Testament is described as the heir of all things. (Heb. 1:2) He is creator of all things. (Col 1:16, Heb 1:3, Col 1:20, Eph 1:10)
- C. Jesus was promised that he would break them with a rod of iron and dash them into pieces like a potter's vessel.
  1. Jesus shall abolish all rule. (I Cor 15:24)

2. Christ shall smite the nations with the sword of his mouth. That sword is the word of God. (Heb 4:12, Eph 6:17, Rev 19:16) See also Rev 2:26–27.

IV The Exhortation (Psm 2:10–12)

A. The word exhort means, "to warn or admonish."

B. The kings of earth are warned to be wise and the judges are exhorted to be instructed. Solomon said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov 1:7)

C. Men are exhorted to serve God with fear. (Ecc 12:13)

D. They are also warned to love and respect the Son of God. If they do not, they will be punished. (I Cor 16:22)

Con: 1. Man's efforts to rebel against God are futile.
2. God will laugh. God will speak. Then God will act against man.
3. Nothing can stop God from carrying out his will.
4. Surely the diety of Jesus is shown in this prophetic and Messianic Psalm.

Death Could Not Hold Him
(Psm 16)

Intro: 1. "Michtim of David" is this Psalm's title. It means, "golden Psalm."
2. Others have called it David's jewel or notable song.
3. It is a Psalm about Christ. We know that from Peter's sermon on Pentecost. See Acts 2:25, 29–31.
4. Paul in Acts 13:35–38 tells us that it is about Christ.
5. Some scholars think it has application to David, saints, and Christ.

I Jesus' Prayer Of Faith (Psm 16:1)

- A. The word "preserve" means, "to keep, save, or guard." It is often used to refer to a bodyguard.
- B. In Job 7:20 God is called a preserver of men. See also Isa 49:7–8.
- C. Because God preserved Christ, we too can be preserved.
  - 1. Jno 17:11 says that Jesus prayed the Holy Father of heaven to keep his disciples in his name.
  - 2. See also Heb 13:5, Mt 28:20, I Pet 1:5
- D. O God is the Hebrew word "El." This is the word for God which Jesus used on the cross and it denotes strength.
- E. Jesus "trusts" his Father. This word means, "to take shelter in."

II Jesus' Faith In Jehovah Alone (Psm 16:2–5)

- A. In verse two Jesus clearly submits himself to the Father and the Father's will.
- B. "I have no good beyond thee." This means that no matter what did or did not do, it would not effect the goodness of God.
- C. The "saints" on earth are the "sanctified or excellent ones." These people (Christians) partake of Jesus' mediatorial work and are the recipients of his goodness which makes them what are are. They are a peculiar people, zealous for good works, and are hallowed to sacred service. (I Pet 2:9, Titus 3:1, 8, 14, Titus 2:14)
- D. If the saints worship other gods and offer other sacrifices they will reap only sorrow. Jesus will not claim them as his own.
- E. Jesus found that a life of obedience lead into "pleasant places." Though Christ was truly the man of sorrows and aquainted with grief, he also knew more joy than anyone to walk the earth in the robe of human flesh. (Heb 12:1–3)
- F. Jesus knows as we should know that happiness is in the

Father. This is his "goodly heritage." Our Father can bring us true happiness. (Eph 3:20–21, Phil 4:19)

III **Jesus Is Content With Faith In The Present** (Psm 6:6–7)

A. Jesus is grateful and wants to praise the Father who gives him counsel.

B. Our Lord often went to his Father in prayer. In so doing he received counsel.
   1. Jno 7:16, 8:28
   2. Jno 12:49–50
   3. Jesus ultimately becomes our counsellor. (Isa 9:6–7)

C. Christ's faith in the present comes from constantly keeping his Father before him. We as Christians are urged to do the same thing with Jesus. (Heb 12:1–2, II Cor 3:18) Because the Father is near, Jesus had faith and confidence that nothing can move or defeat him. The end result of this intimate relationship with the Father is that Christ is filled with joy and gladness. We too should experience the same joys. (Jno 14:27, 16:24, 33)

IV **Jesus' Joyful Confidence About The Future** (Psm 16:8–11)

A. We have just noted Jesus' faith in the Father's presence to keep him from being moved. We also pointed out what a source of joy it was to him. This verse is so important that Peter quotes it in Acts 2:25.

B. Christ then was not afraid of death. He knew that he would dwell in "safety."

C. The Father would not leave his soul in "sheol." This is a Hebrew word for the intermediate state. Some though believe that it stands for the grave. Its Greek counterpart is Hades. Jesus' spirit was not to be left in the spirit world.

D. The physical body of Christ that was placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimethea was not going to corrupt or decay. It would not remain in the pit. Why? Because of the resurrection!

E. Verse ten is quoted by Peter in Acts 2:27 to show that Christ was to be raised from the dead. Verse eleven was also quoted to give credence to Christ's recent escape from the pangs of death.

F. I think verse eleven refers to the ascension of Christ. Jesus will surely know joys and pleasures as the risen Christ. Psalms 24:7–10 speaks of the reaction of heaven to Jesus' return to glory. We too will know exceeding joy in the presence of Jesus. (Jude 24)

Con: We too must place our faith in God alone. God can deliver us from death.

The Submissive and Sacrificial Christ (Psm 22)

Intro: 1. This Psalm was addressed to the chief musician Aijeleth Shahar.

2. It has been called the Psalm of the Cross.
3. Some think that Jesus repeated all of this Psalm while on the cross.
4. This Psalm is a photograph of our Lord's saddest hour. It records some of his dying words. It has also been called a memorial to his expiring joys.

I Jesus' Pitiful Cry For Help

A. The Psalm begins with familiar words. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." These words were spoken on the cross. (Mt 27:46)

1. They are words of faith. Notice the pronoun "my." Twice Jesus speaks about "my God." Notice that the word for God here is "El." It means, "strength or might." Jesus still believed in the power of his Father. We must not mistake his distress for mistrust.

2. Jesus asks why he has been forsaken. He wants to know the reason. There are two reasons.
   a. He forsook Christ because Christ was sin and God is too holy to look on sin. (Hab 1:13)
   b. The Father forsook Jesus because it was the just thing to do. Jesus' death satisfied the just nature of God. (Isa 53:11) It enabled God to be just and the justifier of those who believe in Christ. (Rom 3:25–26)

II Jesus' Lowly Condition (Psm 22:6–8)

A. Jesus' is likened to a lowly worm. Could Job have been speaking of this in Job 25:6?

B. Jesus was to receive the reproach of men. He was also to be despised. Isaiah foretold this also. (Isa 53:2–3) The people surely shot out the lip, shook their heads, and mocked Christ for trusting in the Father while hanging on the cross. (Mt 27:39–44)

III Jesus' Was Devoted To God From His Birth (Psm 22:9–10)

A. God our Father took Jesus out of Mary's womb. It was a virgin birth. (Isa 7:14, Mt 1:23) There never has nor ever shall be another birth like it. Mary was like Lois and Eunice. She taught Jesus from a babe the sacred scriptures that were able to make men wise unto salvation. (II Tim 3:15)

B. We need more mothers and grandmothers like Mary, Eunice, Lois, and Hannah. The older women are certainly to teach the younger women. (Titus 2:3–4)

IV The Sacrifice Of Christ (Psm 22:14–15)

A. Jesus in verse fourteen is "poured out like water." The word "pour" in this text means, "to offer, a libation." Christ poured out his soul unto death. (Isa 53:12) He emptied himself. (Phil 2:7)

B. His "bones were out of joint." I think this is a reference to his crucifixion. His body was stretched on the rack of the tree.

C. His heart melts like wax and his strength is dried up. His tongue cleaveth to his jaw. These are the effects of his physical suffering. He cried out, "I thirst." (Jno 19:28)

V **The Crucifixion Foretold** (Psm 22:16–18)

A. Christ is surrounded by dogs or evil doers. These were the Romans and Jews that were to execute him.

B. His hands and feet were to be pierced. The crucifixion of men is a Roman form of punishment and execution. Zechariah 12:10 also refers to the crucifixion prophetically. This verse is quoted by John in John 19:37 to refer to Christ's death.

C. Jesus counted all his bones. Not one was to be broken. (Jno 19:36, Psm 34:20)

D. Then the Psalmist says that Christ's garmets were to be parted. They will also cast lots or gamble for his garments. This was to be done on his vesture. This was fulfilled in Mt 27:35.

Con: Surely this Psalm proves the deity of Christ and the inspiration of the Bible.

The Shepherd Psalm
(Psm 23)

Intro:
1. Psm 23:1–6
2. For over thirty centuries the twenty-third Psalm has been read, loved, and memorized by millions.
3. The one hundred and eighteen words of this Psalm penetrate to the very depths of our beings.
4. They describe in very vivid detail the leadership, security, compassion, and blessings that belong to

those who call Christ their shepherd.

I **The Person Of The Shepherd** (Psm 23:1)

A. The Lord God is our shepherd. For Christians it is Christ who is our shepherd. The term shepherd tells us a great deal about what God is like. The shepherd is known for his tenderness, gentleness, and loving care. Throughout Psalm one hundred and thirty-six the loving kindness of God is extolled. Jesus was the sweetest, kindest, and most compassionate person to walk the earth. He said, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. (Jno 14:9) Thus, as we look at Christ we see what the Father (shepherd) is like. When we look at the Father we see what Christ (shepherd) is like. Note Jno 10:11, 14–16.

B. The Lord is "my" shepherd said the Psalmist. God and Christ are not the shepherds of the world. They are interested in each individual.

C. "I shall not want." One of the primary responsibilities of the shepherd was to provide for the needs of the sheep. The following verses show us God's provision for man's needs.
1. Mt 6:32–33, 7:11
2. Psm 37:25, 34:10, 84:11
3. Phil 4:19, Eph 3:20–21
4. Jas 1:17, II Pet 1:3
5. Truly, every Christian can say, I do not want.

II **The Provision Of The Shepherd** (Psm 23:2)

A. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Sheep in Bible times began grazing at 4:00 a.m. They grazed until about mid-morning. They started with rough herbage and worked their way to the sweeter grass. Then they would lie down. Sheep do not lie down when they are hungry. They lie down only when they are satisfied.

B. "He leadeth me beside the still waters." Sheep will drink after being satisfied with food and rest.

C. The masses of humanity are hungering and thirsting for something. They don't quite know what. They are restless. If they will but allow Christ to become their shepherd and feed on God's word, they will be happily satisfied. They will find the spiritual calmness that their souls so desperately cry out for. (Mt 11:28–30, Lk 4:4)

III The Pathway Provided By The Shepherd (Psm 23:3)

A. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

B. This is how he "restores our souls."

1. When sheep stray, he seeks them and brings them back into the fold.
2. When sheep are ill, he does not leave them to die. Rather, he carries them in his arms back to his home and ministers to them.
3. When the sheep are injured, he tends their wounds.

C. This is the way Christ treats those of us who are sheep in his fold. "All we like sheep have gone astray and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." (Isa 53:6) "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." (Lk 19:10) When we are sickened or injured by sin, Christ will provide the spiritual medicine needed to begin the healing of our souls. See Jas 5:16

D. David the author of this Psalm was guilty of adultery and murder. He was miserable and needed the joy of his salvation restored. (Psm 51:3, 12) It was restored when he became penitent.

E. Christians often go through life with secret sins. (Psm 19:12) Many are guilty of sins of omission and comission. (Jas 4:17, I Jno 3:4) They need to be restored. They can be restored. (Gal 6:1) They must confess their sins and pray God. (Jas 5:16, I Jno 1:9, Acts 8:21–24)

F. Notice that the shepherd will "lead" his sheep down the path of righteousness. I am told that in the East shepherds do not drive their sheep. They lead them because they know best where the pastures are. In like manner God will not drive us. He will lead us to where we ought to go because he knows best. It is not within man that walketh to direct his own footsteps. (Jer 10:23)

G. We as Christians need Christ's leadership. Sheep left alone will go astray. They have no sense of direction. Their eyesight is limited. Solomon said, There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death. (Prov 14:12)

IV The Presence Promised The Sheep By The Shepherd (Psm 23:4)

A. "The valley of the shadow of death" was a narrow veil between two mountains. It was four and a half miles long, fifteen hundred feet high, and ten to twelve miles wide at the bottom. Wild dogs lurked in the shadows looking for food and were ready to pounce on the sheep as they came through. The sheep were not afraid because the shepherd was there to ward the dogs off with the rod and staff.

B. We too one day will walk literally through the valley of the shadow of DEATH. Paul said that as in Adam all die. It is appointed unto man once to die . . . (I Cor 15:22, Heb 9:27)

C. Christians do not fear death because they know that Christ will be with them. Men can go to the edge of the grave with their loved ones but Christ can go further. He said, "Fear not, I am the first and the last and the living one, I was dead, but behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of hades. (Rev 1:17–18) Christ came into the world to destroy him that had power over death, Satan. He did that and now men are no longer fearful of death in Christ. They are no longer in bondage to their fears. (Heb 2:14–15)

D. One of the most wonderful words in this Psalm is "through." Notice that we will go through the valley.

We will not stay there. This means that Christians will not remain in the grave and in the hadean world. There will be a resurrection. Jesus said, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live. With Paul we can cry out, thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory. Yes, we will be victorious over death. (Jno 11:25, I Cor 15:57)

V **The Preparation Made By The Shepherd** (Psm 23:5–6)

A. The shepherd "prepares a table in the presence of our enemies." The victors in war would hold feasts. While the victors ate and made merry, the captors were chained near by and forced to watch. The Christian is to be victorious over his enemies. These enemies may be Satan and ungodly men. I think they may also be sinful habits and attitudes that we need to conquer. Our faith in Christ the Good Shepherd will enable us to be victorious over the world. (I Jno 5:4)

B. "Anointing one's head with oil" was done as an act of refreshment and was an act of joy. This was often done with guests or people who deserve honor. The ointing filled the room with a pleasant smell. The sinful woman in Luke seven anointed Jesus' head with precious ointment. In so doing she showed her love for Christ. I think the Psalmist is saying that God will provide gladness for the sheep that follow him.

C. "My cup runneth over." It was customary to fill the cup of a guest to overflowing. David is talking about the abundance of blessings that come to followers of the Good Shepherd. Jesus spoke of how God would bless man to the point of overflowing in Lk 6:38. I think that the goodness and mercy in the text represent the blessings of God that cause the cup to run over.

D. Dwelling in the house of the Lord forever has been interpreted as worshipping God as long as one lives. I think it is talking about going to heaven and being with God throughout eternity. (Mt 25:46) Jesus our

Shepherd is preparing mansions for us at this very moment in His Father's house. (Jno 14:1–3)

Con: God-Christ our shepherd can provide for our needs in this life and in the life to come.

The Obedient Son
(Psm 40)

Intro: 1. This Psalm has been entitled A Psalm of David.
2. From Heb 10:5–9 we learn that it is Messianic.
3. Some say it reveals the thoughts of Christ while hanging on the cross.

I **Personal Thanksgiving** (Psm 40:1–3)

A. Jesus waited patiently for Jehovah. Literally the Hebrew says, "waiting I waited." Jesus showed patience in waiting for the Father. Throughout his trial and the suffering of the cross, Jesus did not complain.

B. He cried out to the Father and knew that the Father would eventually hear and answer. He showed us here that we need patience and persistence in prayer. The text says that God "inclined." That is he bent over or low for the purpose of hearing. God will hear and answer our prayers. We must also follow the example of Christ.
1. Lk 18:1, I Thess 5:17
2. Mt 7:7, Acts 2:42

C. In answering the prayers of Jesus, the Father delivered him out of the "horrible pit and out of the mirry clay." That is, God delivered him out of his suffering and perhaps there is a veiled reference to the resurrection here.

The feet of Christ were put on a rock. The rock of accomplishment.

D. "The new Song" in the mouth of Christ is the song of victory. (Rev 15:3–4) It was no doubt a song of joy as well. Victory over sin, death, and Satan brings joy!

E. Now the end result of all of this is that men will see the suffering and death of Jesus and they will fear and trust the Lord.

II **Declaring God's Goodness To His Saints** (Psm 40:4–5)

A. Those who trust in Jehovah will be blessed. See also Prov 3:5.

B. God has done many wonderful works. Think about his work of creation. He works providentially. The work of redemption is the most meaningful to each of us.

C. God often turns his thoughts to man.

D. God's blessings that come our way cannot be numbered. Paul said that the goodness of God ought to move men to repent. (Rom 2:4) This verse teaches us that God's goodness is expressed by his forbearance, and longsuffering. In Rom 11:22 Paul asks us to behold the goodness of God.

III **Jesus Is Dedicated To Doing The Will Of The Father** (Psm 40:6–10)

A. Jesus had his ear opened to the Father. He knew that the Father did not want the sacrifices and offerings of the Old Testament.

1. "Sacrifices" referred to the "peace offering" of Leviticus three.
2. "Offerings" referred to the "meal, burnt, and sin offerings" found in Leviticus chapters one, two, and four.
3. At best these were only temporary forms of atonement. (Heb 10:3–5)

B. In verse seven Jesus speaks. "Lo I am come." These words teach us the following.

1. Jesus had a pre-existence. (Jno 1:1–3, 14)
2. Jesus took upon himself the robe of human flesh. (Phil 2:5–11)
3. Jesus then was virgin born. (Isa 7:14, Mt 1:23)

C. Jesus then said, "In the roll of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God."

1. The roll of the book is thought by some to be the book of life. Others think it is the Penteteuch.
2. Jesus delights to do the will of the Lord. In Lk 22:42 he prayed, not my will but thine be done. His meat was to do the will of the Father. (Jno 4:34) Jesus endured the cross looking to the joy that was set before him. (Heb 12:1–3)
3. We might point out that these words are found in Hebrews 10:5–7. The Hebrew account adds a phrase that is not in this text verbatim but is no doubt implied. That phrase is, "a body thou hast prepared me." God was not happy with the sacrifices of the bodies of animals. He gave Christ a body so that he could die as the Lamb sacrified for our sins. (Jno 1:29)

D. The will of God was carried out in part by preaching the glad tidings of righteousness to the great congregation. Some say the great congregation refers to Jew and Gentile.

1. Lk 4:18
2. Jno 17:4, 6, 8, 14, Mt 28:19–20, Mk 16:15–16, Acts 8:4
3. I think that these verses and others show that Christ and the Apostles preached the will of the Father to the world or great congregation.

Con: We too must learn patience with the Father. God will hear and answer our prayers. Our God is a good God. He blesses us far beyond what we deserve. We too must dedicate ourselves to doing the will of God.

The Beautiful Christ and His Church (Psm 45)

Intro: 1. Some say that this Psalm is about Solomon and the Pharoah's daughter.
2. Others say it is about Solomon and Christ. I think that this is the correct view.

I An Announcement Of Intention (Psm 45:1)

A. "My heart is inditing with good matter." The word "inditing" has been translated, "to rush, swell, boil over, and overflow." The goodly matter is the good-spell or gospel!

B. The good matter or gospel is centered around the king. I suppose the word king refers both to Solomon and Jesus.

II The Beauty Of The Messiah (Psm 45:17)

A. "Thou" refers to the king.

B. Thou art fairer than the children of men. Surely this is Jesus.
  1. Moses was fair.
  2. David was ruddy.
  3. Jesus excells them all. He wàs transfigured and glowed brighter than the sun in Mt 17:2. Surely though the writer had in mind that Jesus had a more beautiful character or nature. He was sinless! (Jno 8:46, I Jno 3:5, I Pet 2:22) Christ was peerless. He is the blessed and only potentate, the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable. (I Tim 6: 15–16)

C. "Grace is poured into thy lips." Certainly the words that fell from the lips of Christ were divine. When Christ finished the Sermon on the Mount the people were astonished at his teaching for he taught them as one having authority and not as one of the scribes. (Mt 7:28–29)

III The Messiah Is Praised (Psm 45:3–9)

A. He is called "the mighty one." Jesus is called the almighty in Rev 1:8 and in Mt 28:18.

B. Christ is also described by the Psalmist as majestic. Peter wrote in II Pet 1:16 that we (the Apostles) were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

C. Christ is glorious. John tells us that Christ became flesh and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth. (Jno 1:14)

D. The Messiah is to ride in his majesty on prosperity. The text tells us that truth, meekness, and righteousness are the steeds that will pull his chariot. (Jno 14:6; Mt 11:28–30, Acts 3:14)

E. Though Jesus' enemies fall, his throne will last forever. Christ will rule with right and he has the right to rule. God the Father was to give him all authority in heaven and on earth. (Mt 28:18)

F. Christ hath been anointed or chosen by God. He has been elevated above all others. Paul said that God put all things to be in subjection under his feet and gave him to the head of all things to the church, which is his body. (Eph 1:22–23) Christ is above all rule, authority, power, and dominion. His name is above every name.

IV The Bride Or Church Is Addressed (Psm 45:13–15)

A. The bride is glorious. Christ will present the church unto himself a glorious church. (Eph 5:25–27)

B. Her raiment is the finest. John the Revelator said that the bride would array herself in fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. (Rev 19:7–8)

C. There will be great joy when the bride enters into the King's palace. Rev 19:9 describes this in these words.

"Blessed. are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb." Truly, the greatest moments in our lives will be the moment that we the bride of Christ join our groom in the everlasting bliss of heaven!

V **The Everlasting Fame of The Messiah** (Psm 45:17)

A. His name will be remembered by all generations. He shall be praised forever.

B. There is no other name in heaven or earth whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12) All men shall confess the name of Christ. Even those who refused to do so in this world. (Phil 2:8–11) Christ shall be praised throughout all eternity. (Rev 5:8–9, 13, 7:19)

Con: What a wonderful Saviour we have. What a privilege to be a part of his bride. What an eternal thrill it shall be to praise him in that land that is fairer than day.

The Reigning Christ
(Psm 72)

Intro: 1. This Psalm is titled A Psalm For Solomon

2. Some scholars say it should read A Psalm by or of Solomon.

3. Clearly the Psalm is a prayer of David. Some think that David was too old and was dying when it was composed. They say that Solomon copied it down.

I **The Messiah's Righteous Rein** (Psm 72:1–7)

A. "Give the king thy judgments, O God." These words came from David for his son Solomon. David also asked for righteousness to be given to Solomon by God. Yes, David was the King and Solomon was the King's son. Though David was a King, Israel was a Theocracy. That is it was a nation ruled ultimately through and by God. David was in position to give Solomon many things but not all that Solomon needed.

B. David also wanted his son to judge the people with righteousness and justice. The results of such reign will be peace. He will protect the poor and the oppressed. He will deal sternly with those who mistreat them. The people would then fear Solomon.

C. Yet, as we look at these words, do we not also see Christ? Has not God given judgment to the Son? (Jno 5:24, II Cor 5:11) Has not God imparted his righteousness to the Son that will be used in judgment? (Acts 17:30–31) Jesus Christ our judge will grant us eternal peace when we enter heaven. Even now we have peace that is beyond understanding. It is unlike anything that the world has to offer. (Phil 4:6–7, Jno 14:27) Through his death, burial, and resurrection Christ has broken our oppressors into pieces. They are sin, Satan, and death. As a result of these things mortal men will fear God. This fear will be eternal for Christ is eternal in his nature. (Jno 8:56, Rev 1:8, 17–18) Certainly the kingdom of God is everlasting. (Dan 2:44)

II **The Messiah's Universal Rein** (Psm 72:8–11)

A. His dominion is from sea to sea. He rules to the ends of the world. Why not? Jesus made the world and all that in it is. (Jno 1:1–3, 14)

B. Those who are unconquered will lick his dust. Christ must reign until he hath put enemies under his feet. (I Cor 15:25)

C. All Kings and all nations shall humble themselves before him. Christ is the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings. (Rev 17:14) He is the blessed and only Potentate. (I Tim 6:15–16) He has all power or authority in heaven and on earth. (Mt 28:18)

D. Dan 7:14 sums it all up. "And there was given unto him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

III The Beneficient Reign (Psm 72:12–14)

A. Christ is concerned with the needy, poor, and helpless.

B. Their lives are precious in his sight.

C. Isaiah foretold that Christ would preach good tidings to the poor. He would proclaim release to the captives. He would recover sight to those who are blind and would set at liberty those who are bruised. (Isa 61, Lk 4:16–18) The common people were the ones who heard Jesus gladly. (Mk 12:27)

IV The Perpetual Reign (Psm 72:15–17)

A. His name shall live forever. It will endure as long as the sun. All men shall be blessed in him. All the nations shall call him happy. This description does not fit Solomon in spite of his earthly greatness. The name of Christ will be acknowledged by all men in this life or in the life to come. (Phil 2:8–11) Christ is the source of all happiness. His teachings will produce happiness. (Mt 5:1–12) Abraham was told in Genesis twelve that through his descendents all of the nations of the world would be blessed. This prophecy came true when Jesus the Messiah came into the world.

V Doxology (Psm 72:18–19)

A. God is worthy of blessing, praise, or worship because of the wonderful works he has done. Jesus is called Wonderful in Isa 9:6–7.

B. The earth should be full of his glory. It will be if men will heed I Cor 10:31 which says that we are to glorify God in all that we do. It will be if men will worship God in spirit and in truth. (Jno 4:24) It will be if we preach His glorious gospel to the world. (II Cor 4:4, Mk 16:15–16) It will be if we will establish the glorious church in each nation. (Eph 5:25–27, Mt 28:18–20)

VI **A Postscript** (Psm 72:20)
The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Con: Let us thank God for the reign of Jesus our Lord and the Messiah.
Let us as Christians share in the reign of Christ now an and in the life to come. (Rom 5:17)

Let Us Praise Him
(Psm 89)

Intro: 1. This is called a covenant Psalm that closes the third book of Psalms.
2. It is called Maschil for it is instructive
3. It was written by Ethan the Ezrahite

I **Extolling The Faithfulness Of God To His Covenant** (Psm 89:1–4)
A. The Psalmist here extols God's mercy and faithfulness.
B. God made a covenant with his chosen. This was David. God made this covenant with David through Nathan. (II Sam 7:12–16)
C. Thy seed refers to Christ in my judgment. (Gal 3:16) Surely, the eternal nature of Christ is seen in verse four. Christ was to sit on David's throne. The scriptures abound with references to this fact. (Acts 2:30) Now it is true that no earthly king sits on David's throne. Jesus the King of Kings sits on David's throne at this very hour. Christ's kingdom is spiritual in nature. (Jno 18:36, Lk 17:21) Let us not forget that Christ came from the kingly tribe of Judah. (Mt 1:3, Heb

7:14)

II Praise To The Name Of The Lord (Psm 89:5–14)

A. God is to be praised for his wonders and for his faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones. He is to be praised by the heavens and by the congregation of the saints. Both angels and children of God should praise God for the wonders of creation, providence, and salvation. God is to be praised for his faithfulness in keeping the terms of his covenant with man.

B. Who can compare with God? No one! Out of all of the created beings in the universe, only Jesus could open the book and the seals thereof. (Rev 5:8–9) God is to be feared above all others. (Ecc 12:13, Heb 12:29, Mt 6:9) No one can compare with the might and rule of God. He brought mighty Rahab or Egypt to defeat. He created the world out of nothing. (Gen 1:1) Righteousness, justice, lovingkindness, and truth are characteristic of the one on the throne.

C. All that we have said can also be applied to Christ. The supremacy of Christ is seen in the fact that in all things he must have the preeminence. (Col 1:18)

III The Happiness Of People Who Have Such A God (Psm 89:15–18)

A. Those who walk with God will know the blessings of joy, glory, strength, and favor. God will exhalt or lift his people up.

B. Our shield, our protection is provided by Jehovah and our King, the holy one of Israel. Is not the Psalmist also talking about the Messiah here? (Isa 41:14, Acts 3:14)

IV The Terms Of The Covenant (Psm 89:19–37)

A. The holy one is called "mighty" in verse nineteen. Christ is almighty. He has all power. (Rev 1:8, Mt 28:18)

B. He is called the "exhalted one." (Isa 42:1)

C. Christ is called the "firstborn." (Col 1:24)

D. The "seed" of verse twenty-nine refer to his church. The church or kingdom will never be destroyed. The gates of hades will not prevail against it. (Dan 2:44, Mt 16:18)

E. Notice also verse twenty-six. "He shall cry unto me, thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation." David never addressed God as his father in the Old Testament! Neither did any other Bible character! Christ addressed God as his Father. At age twelve, he said that he was about his Father's business. (Lk 2:49) He taught the disciples to pray, our Father. (Mt 6:9) Forty-five times Jesus uses the name Father in John fourteen through sixteen!

F. Those who break the covenant will be punished. We can depend on God to keep his covenant. Can God depend on us? (Jas 1:22, 4:17, Rom 6:23)

Con: We should be exceedingly grateful that we are living under a better covenant that is enacted upon better promises. (Heb 8:6) We should praise God also for his character and the blessings that we have in Christ. (Eph 1:3)

Our King and High Priest
(Psm 110)

Intro: 1. This Psalm is entitled a Psalm of David.

2. The subject of this Psalmis the Messianic Priest-King.

3. This Psalm is quoted or alluded to at least ten times in the New Testament.

I An Introduction (Psm 110:1–3)

A. "The Lord said unto my Lord" is an interesting statement.

1. The first "Lord" is Jehovah in the "Hebrew."
2. The second "Lord" is the word "Adonai."
3. Thus, we have a conversation between God the Father and God the Son.
4. This text also proves the doctrine of the Trinity. If there are at least two members in the Godhead, is it not reasonable to believe in the Holy Spirit also?

B. The Father told the Son to sit at this right hand. This is a seat of power, dominion, and dignity. Sitting is a resting and ruling posture. Christ will reign, until he has by the power of the Father put all enemies under his feet. (I Cor 15:25–26)

C. The Lord shall send the rod or sceptre or his might out of Zion. Many scholars believe this to be the church. (Isa 2:2–3) They say more specifically that the rod is the gospel that was to be preached by the church. Christ is to rule in the midst of his enemies. That is his kingdom that is to be set up and maintained in spite of all opposition.

D. "Thy people" are those who hear and obey the gospel. They willingly submit to Christ. They are like servants who choose to serve or soldiers who volunteer for the army. In fact the phrase "in the day of thy power" has been understood to mean, "in the day of thy muster or in the day of thy armies." His soldiers will be characterized by "the beauty of holiness." This may mean that they were attracted to the holiness of Christ or that they will be characterized by holiness. I think that both ideas fit here.

E. "Thou hast the dew of thy youth." As the dew sparkles with beauty, the army of Christ will shine out with holy excellence. It will be characterized by youthful vigor say some.

II **The Messianic Priest** (Psm 110:4)

A. "The Lord (Jehovah) hath sworn." When God swears with an oath it must be a solemn matter under consideration.

B. "And will not repent" means that God has made up his mind and what is done is done. There will be no change. (Mal 3:1)

C. Notice that the text says, "thou art." He uses a present tense verb. Thou wast, thou art, and thou shalt be forever a Priest-King.

D. Melchizedek was a part of an ancient priesthood. It was simple and free from ritual or alot of ceremony. He swayed the people of his day with the sceptre (King) and the censer because he was a priest. He was both a Priest and a King. (Gen 14:18) God did not allow a King to be a Priest at the same time. Melchizekek must have been an exception to the rule.

E. There are many similarities between Melchizekek and Christ.

   1. They were both Kings of righteousness and peace. (Heb 7:2)
   2. They were both Priests of the most high God. (Heb 4:15, 7:1)
   3. They bless all the faithful as Abraham was blessed of Melchizedek. (Gen 14, Heb 7)
   4. They both receive homage from the people.
   5. They both were without progenitors. They have no genealogy. They have no beginning and no end (Heb 7:3)
   6. Jesus was like Melchizedek in that he did not receive the priesthood through fleshly birth. Aaron's descendents were to serve as high priests and priests came from the tribe of Levi. Jesus came from the tribe of Judah which provided Kings and not Priests! (Heb 7:14)
   7. Both Christ and Melchizedek stand on their own personal merits. Just as no one came before and after Melchizedek, so no one can come before or after Christ. No one can do what Chrsit alone can do!

III Future Victories Of The Priest-King (Psm 110:5–7)

A. He shall strike through Kings in the day of his wrath. This means he will achieve complete and total victory over the powers that rule the nations.
   1. Eph 1:21, I Cor 15:24,
   2. Rev 11:15, 19:6, 17:14, 2:26–27

B. "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."
   1. Some believe that this means that he will be so involved in the destruction of his enemies that he will take a drink, when and where he can. After his victory he shall lift up his head. That is he shall be proud of his accomplishment.
   2. Others view this verse as referring to the humility and the exhaltation of Christ. (Phil 2:5–11)
   3. I think both views have merit.

Con: Hebrews chapters five through seven certainly make application of this Psalm to Christ.

The Triumphant Messiah
(Psm 118)

Intro: 1. The author is David. Some though think that this Psalm was written after the return from captivity.
2. This Psalm is quoted in part at least four times in the New Testament.
3. We shall break this Psalm down into the following parts.
4. Exhortation to praise the mercy of God. (Psm 118: 1–5)
5. Persuasion to trust God based on the Psalmist's own deliverance. (Psm 118:6–14)
6. The Messiah's triumph. (Psm 118:15–16)
7. The chastisement (Psm 118:17–18)

8. The sacred enclosure. (Psm 118:19–21)
9. Christ the chief cornerstone. (Psm 118:22–23)
10. The Lord's day. (Psm 118:24)
11. A doxology. (Psm 118:25–29)
12. I shall select three of these divisions to discuss in this sermon.

I **The Messiah's Triumph** (Psm 118:15–16)

A. The personal triumphs of Jesus
  1. Over Satan – Gen 3:15, Heb 2:14–15, I Jno 3:8, Lk 4:1–13, Rev 12:9–11, 20:10
  2. Over the world – Jno 16:33
  3. Over sin – Isa 53:6, Gal 1:4, I Cor 15:1–4
  4. Over death – Heb 2:14–15, Rev 1:17–18, Jno 5:28–29
  5. The triumphs are summed up in Col 2:15 and Eph 4:8

B. The triumphs of the gospel in human hearts
  1. The gospel converts men from sin to holiness – I Pet 1:15
  2. The gospel empowers the soul to resist sin – Eph 6:10–18
  3. The gospel promotes moral excellence – I Jno 3: 2–3

C. The triumphs of the church
  1. Mt 16;18, Dan 2:44, Heb 12:28
  2. Rev 19:6, I Jno 5:4

II **Christ The Chief Cornerstone** (Psm 118:4)

A. In our discussion of the chief cornerstone, let us learn what it is not.
  1. It is not our feelings towards Christ. They often shift and are not trustworthy. (Jer 10:23, Prov 14:12)
  2. It is not doctrine which merely tells us about the cornerstone.
  3. It is not the example of Christ which describes his character.

   4. It is not the church of Christ which is built upon the cornerstone.

B. The cornerstone is Christ himself. (Eph 2:19–20) He is the only solid, constant, and eternal foundation upon which all must build their lives. All else is sand. (Mt 7:24–26)

C. Let us note the purpose of the cornerstone.
   1. It is used as an adornment. They are often costly.
   2. It is used for stability, firmness, strength, and durability.
   3. It is used for unity and compactness.
   4. Surely, Christ adorns our lives. He makes them truly beautiful. He is the firm foundation upon which all Christians can withstand the storms of life. He holds us all together. Unity is essential for the well being of the church. We the members of the body must remained attached to Christ the head if we are going to live. The members of the body must function in harmony with one another if the church is to serve as God intended. (I Cor 12:14–13, Phil 1:27, Acts 2:47)

D. Christ is the only divinely established cornerstone.
   1. This is the Lord's doing. (v 23)
   2. This is not the doing of men or angels.
   3. This is the will of the Godhead, the Sacred Three.
   4. The divine attributes of God brought it about. Wisdom devised it. Justice instituted it. The power of God made it a reality.
   5. Divine providence was also at work in it. (Gal 4:4)

E. Christ is the only cornerstone. We cannot build our lives on atheism, psychology, sociology, theology, ethics, or denominationalism. "For other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor 3:11)

F. Christ is the rejected cornerstone.
   1. Isa 53:3 foretold that Christ would be despised and rejected of men.
   2. Jno 1:11 says that Christ came to his own and his

own received him not.

3. Paul in I Cor 1:23 declared, "But we preach crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishnesss."
4. The Psalmist's prophecy of the rejection is quoted four times in the New Testament. (Mk 12:10–12, Acts 4:11, I Pet 2:7, Mt 21:44)
5. My friends sin, infidelity, heresy, and the world refuse to build on to Christ the chief cornerstone.

G. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. (v 23)

1. It is marvellous because of its unlikelihood. Christ was born in a manger. He was the man of sorrows. He was nailed to the cross. Who would have dreamed that God choose him to the head of the corner?
2. It is marvellous when you think of the teaching needed to bring it about. Christ taught men that they had to do things that ran contrary to their natural inclinations. He demanded that they give up their quest for the physical and pursue the spiritual. (Mt 6:24, Lk 12:15) He asked men to give up pleasure for suffering, pride for humilty, riches for poverty, etc.

III The Lord's Day (Psm 118:24)

A. This is the day which the Lord hath made.

B. Some think this refers to the day of deliverance or salvation.

C. Others believe it is referring to the Lord's day or the day we know as the first day of the week. (Rev 1:10, Acts 20:7) This day our Lord came forth out of the grave. On this day the church was established. On this day we are to give of our means. We are also to eat the Lord's Supper on this day. (Mk 16:1–8, Acts 20:17, I Cor 16:1–2, Acts 2:1)

Con: Like the Messiah, we too can enjoy victory in this life and in the life to come. We can have that victory because we make up the spiritual house of God, as living stones. We are attached to the cornerstone. (I Pet 2:5, Eph 2:19–20)

LOVE

The First and Great Commandment

Intro: 1. Mk 12:28–31
2. This is one of the greatest texts in all the Bible

I The Background Of This Occasion (v 28)

A. He was a scribe. Matthew's account says that he was also a Pharisee and a lawyer. The scribes were men who copied, preserved, and interpreted the law. This scribe had heard Jesus and the Sadducees discuss the resurrection.

B. The scribe asked Jesus a question. Matthew says that the scribe tempted Jesus. If he was trying Jesus to find a weakness, he would fail. If he truly wanted to know the truth and I think that he did, he would find it.

C. The scribe wanted to know which command was the first. Which is the greatest, the most fundamental, the most important, the primary, or leading commandment of them all. There were 613! This was a question that had divided the Jews for centuries.

D. What if someone were to ask you to give them the most precious verse in the New Testament? If you could speak about the most vital doctrine of the Bible, what would it be? We can see from these questions that answering would not be easy!

II Jesus' Reply (v 29)

A. Jesus spoke the "Schema ..." It was first recorded in Deuteronomy 6:4. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." This sentence is used to begin every synagogue service. It was Israel's declaration of monotheism to the nations. A copy of the Schema was kept in "phylacteries," which were wooden boxes worn on the foreheads and wrists. It was also placed in "muzuzahs" which were containers or boxes that were attached to the doors of Jewish homes.

B. Jesus then said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

C. The word love comes from the root word, "agapao." It is made up of two words that language scholars render in the following ways:

   1. This word can mean, "to act intensely." Thus, to love God as Jesus directed means, that we are to love him through actions characterized by intensity.
   2. A second definition is, "to eagerly cling to." We must eagerly cling to God, if we are to love him as God instructs.
   3. "Affectionate admiration" is another way to love God.
   4. Those who love God will, "constantly rest in God because, they are pleased and satisfied with God."
   5. Finally, the word means, "a soverign preference given to one above all others."

D. Love then is the leading fort, that must be secured and garrisoned for God.

E. Note that that we are to love the "Lord." This word refers to, "Jehovah." The word Jehovah means, "the self existent one." It could also be defined by Ex 3:14 in which says his name is, "I Am that I Am."

F. Jesus said, love the Lord "thy" God. Love then "your" God. He is "our" God because he is our creator, sustainer, and owner. Paul expressed it well on Mars Hill when he stated, "For in him, we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28)

G. We are to love God with "all." The word "all" is used here to refer to "whole." We are to love God with the "whole of our heart, soul, mind, and strength."

H. The word "heart" does not refer to the blood pumping organ in our chest.

   1. To love with the heart means that we will love nothing but that which has reference to God.

2. It means that we should be ready to give up, do, or suffer anything, so that God may be glorified and pleased.
3. Loving God with the whole heart means that we give him our undivided affection.
4. In other words, loving God with the heart means that we love God with our emotions, feelings, will will, or inner man.
5. Prov 4:23 says, "guard thy heart with all diligence, for out of it proceed all the issues of life." Solomon also wrote, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. (Prov 23:7) Jesus taught, "Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." (Mt 6:21) If God is our treasure (the love of our hearts), then that part of man that is so important to his salvation, will be in the right place.

I. The word "soul" can be translated by at least three different words. The context will determine which definition should be given. I think that in Mark's account the word should be understood as "life."
   1. To love God with the whole of our soul is to use our life to glorify and serve him. See I Cor 10:31.
   2. Loving God with the soul means that we see life and death as that which comes from and leads to God.
   3. Jesus in Matthew 10:39 said, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Loving God with the soul means that we will lose ourselves in Jesus' service, whether by life or by death. The early Christians were admonished by Jesus to remain faithful even unto death, if they were to receive the crown of life. (Rev 2:10) Those who overcame Satan in Bible times were those, who loved not their own lives even unto death. (Rev 12:12)

J. The word "mind" refers to man's intellect. We must then put intelligence into our affections for God. Christians must not be characterized by blind devotion. We can love God with our minds, when we study only that which has a relationship to God and his will. We can do this by meditating on his law day and night. (Psm 1:2) We must study to show ourselves approved unto God. We must rightly divide the word of truth. (II Tim 2:15) Perhaps Paul sums up what Jesus is saying here in Col 3:1–2, "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set mind on things that are above, and not on things that are upon the earth."

K. Finally, we are to love God with the whole of our "strength." Some render this word "might or strenuous energy, power, might, or strength of our bodies in loving God.
   1. Solomon alluded to this in Ecc 9:10 when he said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might . . . "
   2. Paul declared that whatever we do, we must do heartily. (Col 3:23)
   3. We can love God with the whole strength of our bodies, when we offer them as living sacrifices to God. (Rom 12:1–2) We can also obey this command when we glorify God in our bodies. (I Cor 6:19–20) Paul magnified Christ in his body. (Phil 1:20)

L. In Matthew's account Jesus said that this was the "first" commandment. It was and is first because it was and is the most important commandment. It is the most important because it sums up man's relationship to God.

M. Both accounts say this is a "great" commandment. It is the greatest commandment because it is all inclusive. It forbids atheism, polytheism, idolatry, yea, all sins against God.

III **The Scribe's Remarks** (v 32–33)

A. The scribe told Jesus that he told the truth and told it well.

B. To love God and neighbor is worth all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices that the Jews could offer.

C. I think that we too should learn that loving God and neighbor is worth more than all the services or rituals, that we could ever participate in. They are useless without obedience to these commands. (Titus 1:16, II Tim 3:5, Mt 15:7–9, I Sam 15:22)

IV **Jesus' Commendation Of The Scribe** (v 34)

A. Jesus said that the scribe had answered discreetly.

B. He then said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom." He was a good candidate for the kingdom of God or the church that was to soon be established.

C. What was there about this man that made Jesus say what he did?

1. He was a man of honest intentions. He really wanted to know what the will of God was. We can know if we want to. (Jno 7:17, 8:31–32)
2. His concepts of religion were spiritual and not carnal. This is more than could be said for the Apostles. (Acts 1:5)
3. He was also a man with an open mind and receptive heart. Jesus in the parable of the soils spoke of the human heart that was the good ground. It was, "an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." (Lk 8:15, Acts 17:11)
4. There are many today, who are not far from the kingdom. We must sow the seed (the gospel) into their fertile hearts. (Mk 16:15, I Cor 3:6)

The Royal Law

Intro: 1. Mt 22:37–40 will be our lesson text. Notice that in this text Jesus gives two great commandments, though he was asked for only one. The two go together because they sum up the law and the prophets. They sum up the Ten Commandments. They deal with man's relationship to God and man.

2. James 2:8 refers to the second commandment as the "royal law."
3. The royal law that deals with the love of our neighbors began in these verses:
   a. Lev 19:18, 34
   b. Deut 10:19
4. The royal law is alluded to at least ten times in the New Testament. See Mt 5:43, 19:19, 22:39, Mk 12:30, Lk 10:27, Gal 5:14.

I An Analysis Of The Text

A. "Thou" means "you."

B. "Shalt love" comes from the verb "agapao." It means, "to love the unlovable, the unlovely, those who cannot merit nor deserve our love. It is unconquerable benevolence. It also means to act intensely, to eagerly cling to, and to affectionately admire."

C. The word "neighbor" simply means, "one who is near."

D. Note that we are to love neighbor as "self." There is nothing wrong with self love, if it is handled properly.

II This Love Is Lacking

A. It was lacking when the Egyptians enslaved the Jews.

B. It was lacking when the early Christians were persecuted.

C. The Nazis and Communists have shown a lack of this kind of love. We see it quite clearly today in Cambodia, Afghanastan, and in Iran.

D. Human history in many respects is a record that contains man's inhumanity to man.

E. We need to be aware of the fact that Christians can and do break this commandment. Many disobey it, because they really don't know who their neighbors are.

III Who Is Our Neighbor?

A. In Mt 5:43–44 we learn that our neighbors and our enemies could well be the same. For the Jew, the Gentile was his enemy. But I think Jesus also teaches, that he is his neighbor as well.

B. Lk 10:25–37 teaches us who our neighbor is. This famous parable about the good Samaritan teaches us that:

1 1. Our neightbor may be one who is not of our religious belief.
   2. Our neighbor does not have to be in our own immediate neighborhood.
   3. Our neighbor may be one who is neglected and in need.
   4. Our neighbor is not necessarily one, who is easy to love, one who thinks, acts, and dresses like us.

IV To What Extent Should We Love Our Neighbor?

A. We must love them "as ourselves." This principle is not new.
   1. Lev 19:34
   2. Eph 5:33

B. Consider the so called "golden rule." (Mt 7:12)

V How Should We Love Our Neighbor?

A. Again we must love him as ourselves.

B. We must love him with our attitudes. The priest and the levite in the parable of the good Samaritan had the attitude, "what is mine is mine and I am going to keep it." The Samaritan had the attitude, "what is mine is thine and I am going to share it."

C. We must love our neighbor with our actions. The Ten Commandments were divided into two sections. One dealt with man's relationship with God and the other with man.
   1. From a negative standpoint our actions according towards our neighbors would include refraining

from killing or stealing from them. We must not commit adultery with them nor bear false witness against them. We must not covet what they possess. (Duet 5:16–21, Rom 13:8–10)

2. From a positive standpoint, we must show mercy to our neighbors. (Lk 10:36–37, Rom 15:2, Eph 4:25, Gal 6:10)

D. We must also love our neighbors by loving their souls. We must strive to meet their spiritual needs. We can do this by:
   1. Setting the right example (II Cor 3:2)
   2. Exerting the right kind of influence (Mt 5:16)
   3. Teaching them the gospel (Mk 16:15–16)

E. Summing it all up, we could say that loving our neighbor means, that we would do unto them, what we would want them to do for us, if the circumstances were reversed.

VI Why Should We Love Our Neighbor?

A. We should do it because it is commanded and because it is among the greatest of all God's commandments.

B. We must love our neighbor in order to love God. (I Jno 4:20)

C. We must love our neighbor in order to escape death. (I Jno 3:14)

D. Jas 2:8–9 tells us that we should love our neighbor so that we will not be guilty of respect of persons. See also Mt 5:43–48

E. Summing it up, we might say that because God cares, we care. Because God loves us, as wretched as we are, we must love others, as wretched as they are. (I Jno 4:19, Rom 5:6–9)

Con: Loving God and neighbor sums up the Old and New Testaments!

Loving Our Enemies

Intro: 1. Mt 5:44–48
2. How should we love our enemies?

I We Can Love Our Enemies By Forgiving Them

A. Jesus forgave those who crucified him. (Lk 23:34)
B. Stephen forgave those who stoned him. (Acts 7:59–60)
C. Jesus and Stephen did not forgive their enemies for what they were. They forgave them because of what Jesus and Stephen were!
D. Too many times we hold grudges. We want those who have offended us to crawl in the dirt. We are slow to forgive because we do not truly forgive our enemies. If we will not forgive those who have sinned against us, we will not be forgiven. (Mt 6:14–15)

II We Can Love Our Enemies By Doing Them Good

A. Rom 12:20
B. Doing them good might change them into friends. This is what God does. (Mt 5:44–45)
C. Well, what if that won't work? We must still keep on loving them. If we will do this, our reward will be great. (Lk 6:35)

III We Must Love Our Enemies That We May Be The Children Of Our Father

A. We often say, like father like son. He is a chip off the old block is another common expression. We make these observations because in the actions of the children, we see the character of the father, who gave them life.
B. Christians love their enemies so that they can be children of the heavenly Father. (Mt 5:46) We love our enemies then that we may be like Him, who gave us life.
C. God loved those who were his enemies, when he sent

Jesus to die on the cross. (Rom 5:6–10)

IV We Must Love Our Enemies Because We Must Do More Than Sinners

A. Jesus said, "For if ye love those that love you, what reward have ye, do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Gentiles the same?" (Mt 5:46–47)

B. The world needs to see something different, something extra in Christians.

C. Too many have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. They profess that they know God but by their works they deny him. Christians must go the extra mile. Second mile religion ought to be our trademark. (II Tim 3:5, Titus 1:16, Mt 5:41)

D. When we love our enemies, we do more than others.

V We Must Love Our Enemies In Order To Know God

A. John wrote, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." (I Jno 4:8)

B. If we do not know God, eternal life is not ours. (Jno 17:3)

VI Loving Our Enemies Perfects Our Love

A. Mt 5:48 says, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." See the context. (Mt 5:43–47)

B. John tells us that "perfect love casts our fear, ... he that feareth is made perfect in love." (I Jno 4:18)

VII We Must Love Our Enemies For Our Own Good

A. Rom 12:20–21 says, "But if thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good."

B. If we do not love our enemies, we will not be overcoming evil. We will be allowing evil to overcome us.

Con: Jno 3:16, Rom 5:6–9

The Eleventh Commandment

Intro: 1. Once a very famous religious leader heard of the piety and hospitality of a preacher and his family. He wanted to find out more about the preacher. He thus disguised himself as a beggar and asked for a place to spend the night. That night he was invited to the family devotion of the preacher's family. The preacher's wife asked her children how many commandments there were. They said ten. The beggar said eleven and was given a mild rebuke. After they all went to bed, the beggar heard the preacher pray and decided to reveal himself to him. He did so and was invited to preach the next morning which was Sunday. When he got up to preach, he announced that his subject would be the Eleventh Commandment! His text would be John 13:34–35.

2. I too want to preach on the Eleventh Commandment and will use the same text.

I Let Us Begin Our Lesson With A Word Study

A. The Greek language is one the greatest languages in all of human history. They had a word for every idea or thought.

B. "Eros" is a word denoting sexual love. This kind of love is to be exercised in marriage only. This kind of love is not found in our text.

C. "Phileo" is a word meaning, "the warm tender affection of friends." Jesus did not use this word in our text.

D. "Storgos" denotes "family love." Again this word is not in Jno 13:34–35.

E. Jesus uses the word "Agape." It means, "unconquerable benevolence, undefeatable good will. It is love that extends itself to the unlovely and the unlovable. This kind of love seeks the highest possible good for others." This is the kind of love that God had for man.

F. Note also that in the text the verb tense tells us to "keep on loving."

II What Do People Associate With The Church Of Christ?

A. What do people think of, when they think of the church of our Lord?

B. We are known in our communities as the people who believe in baptism and the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. Others think of us as the people who do not believe in instrumental music. Yet, the Bible does not say that these should be the things that should identify us as the disciples of Christ. Don't get me wrong. I believe that these things are Biblical and absolutely essential. But in our text, Jesus says that the world will know that we belong to him, by the way that we love one another! Is this the way that the people in our communities perceive us?

C. We are to be fervent in our love of the brotherhood and this love is to continue as long as time remains. (I Pet 2:17, 4:8, Heb 13:1)

D. Note also that we are to love one another as Christ has loved us. How are we to do this.

III We Are To Love One Another Selflessly

A. In Phil 2:6 we are told that Jesus emptied himself for us, as he died on the cross. The word "emptied" means, "to empty, to remove everything from a container. It means that there was not anything left!"

B. In II Cor 8:9 Paul wrote, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." How rich was Christ? How poor did he become? Only God knows. The point is that he gave his total self for us. Christ pleased not himself. (Rom 15:3)

C. Love does not seek its own. (I Cor 13:5)

IV We Most Love The Brethren Sacrifically

A. In all of human history, there has never been anyone, who ever loved any more sacrifically, than Jesus Christ the Son of God.

B. Jesus taught us that there is no greater love than that of one man laying down his life for another. (Jno 15:13) Here said Christ is the supreme proof, the one deed above all others, that will prove that we love one another.

C. In light of the above text let us consider I Jno 3:16, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

D. Someone has observed that loving sacrifically includes living and giving in a sacrificial manner. We are not to love in word but in deed! (I Jno 3:17–18)

V We Must Love One Another Understandingly

A. Jesus Christ knows all men. He knows what fills their hearts. (Jno 2:24–25) He understands us because he was tempted in all points like us, yet without sin.

B. He knew the twelve Apostles. He was always aware of their weaknesses. Yet, he loved them to the end. (Jno 13:1) Yes, though Peter denied him and though Judas was to betray him, Christ loved them. He loved James and John in spite of their tempers.

C. If Christ knew and loved his disciples in spite of their weaknesses and faults, we should be able to love our fellow men, regardless of their sins! If not why not? The pitiful thing about brethren is, that so often, they will not love other brothers in the Lord, whose weakness are less their own!

D. Paul taught us that love suffers long, love taketh not account of evil, love beareth all things. (I Cor

13:4–5, 7)

VI Finally, We Must Love Our Fellow Christians Forgivingly

A. Mt 26:56 tells us that when the mob came to take Jesus in the garden, the disciples forsook him and fled. Though the Apostles often quarreled among themselves, though they were so often blind, insensitive, slow to learn, and faithless, Jesus forgave them.

Jesus cried out from the cross, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." This statement obviously covered those who were guilty of nailing him to the cross. I wonder though, if it did not cover his disciples who had fled.

B. How in the name of common sense, can we treat one another, as we so often do in the church, when our Lord was willing to forgive his disciples so lovingly? We must be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as Christ has forgiven us. (Eph 4:32)

Con: "Behold how they love one another." That was the observation of the first century world about the early Christians. May God help us to so love one another, that the twentieth century world may make the same observation.

WORSHIP

Worship

Intro: 1. The Greeks had a word for man called "anthropos." It means, "the upward looking one." David as a shepherd boy must have looked up alot. He wrote in Psm 8:3, "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?" Yes, man of all living creatures is a creature that looks up and reaches out to a higher power.

2. Thus, all men worship someone or something. Man has a built in desire to worship. Paul declared that he had found an altar to an unknown God. (Acts 17:23) If man was created to worship and I believe that he was, he must learn who and how to worship.

I What Is Worship?

A. Worship is an old English word that came from the word "worthship." It means, "to ascribe worth."

B. The English dictionary defines worship as, "courtesy, reverence, devotion, homage, veneration that is offered to diety. It is profound respect, mingled with fear and affection."

C. From an Old Testament standpoint the word "shahah" appears some 95 times. It means, "to bow down or to prostrate." It is found in the following texts:

1. Ex 4:31
2. Neh 8:6

D. In the New Testament the word "proskuneo" is found 59 times. It means, "to kiss the hand or ground. It describes one who falls to his knees and to one who touches the ground with his forehead. Thus, it describes one who bows or prostrates himself. It refers to an expression of divine reverence and homage for a superior."

1. Rev 5:8–9 uses this word.
2. See also Rev 5:14

E. Another New Testament word for worship is "sebomai." It denotes, "reverence or standing in awe of." See Heb 12:28–29

F. Found 24 times is the word "latreuo." This word has been defined as, "to serve by performing a sacred service or to offer a gift or sacrifice." It is used in the following passages:

1. Rom 12:1
2. Heb 9:14
3. I Pet 2:5

G. "Threskeia" is a word translated, "to worship, revere, tremble, serve, or care for." It is found in passages like Jas 1:26–27.

H. Summing it up, the New Testament concept of worship includes a reverential attitude towards God that is expressed in action. This may be done through formal service or in our daily lives.

I. Next notice what others have said about what worship is.

1. Worship is a group of specialized activities in which men draw near unto God and communicate with God in a specialized manner.
2. Worship is feeding the mind on the truth of God, quickening the conscience on the holiness of God, purging the imagination with the beauty of God, opening one's heart to the love of God, and devoting one's will to the purpose of God.
3. Worship entails participation. Going to church is the greatest spectator sport in America. We are not the audience. The songleader and preacher are not the only participants. God is the only spectator. Too many come to be entertained and wonder how long they will be detained. This is the reason that so many say that they never get anything out of worship. If you put nothing in, you will get nothing out!

J. Worship involves humbling, offering, paying, giving, and performing.

II Why Should Man Worship?

A. We should worship to do God's will. God commands it!
   1. In Mt 4:10, Rev 19:10, 22:9, we are told to worship God alone.
   2. The Father seeks men to engage in true worship which is in spirit and in truth. (Jno 4:23–24)

B. We should worship God to learn more of God's will.
   1. We must learn of Jesus. (Mt 11:28–30, II Pet 3:18)
   2. Jesus used worship time to learn more of God's will. (Lk 4:16)
   3. We should learn from our song service. (Col 3:16)
   4. Paul discoursed with the saints in Troas during a worship assembly. (Acts 20:7)

C. In worship we commune with God. We enter into his presence. If we do not enjoy that now, will we ever enjoy it in heaven?
   1. Jesus is with the smallest of assemblies. (Mt 18:20)
   2. He will commune with us as we partake the Lord's Supper. (Mt 26:29)

D. Worship makes us like God!
   1. See Psm 115:8
   2. Also note II Cor 3:18

E. Worship also inspires us. The idea of God high and lifted up, transcendent, splendid beyond anything that man can conceive is inspiring. We need a little inspiration.
   1. Isaiah saw God in this fashion. (Isa 6:1–6)
   2. So did John. See Rev 4:8–10

F. Worship time should be a time of restoration. David in the twenty-third Psalm said that God can restore our souls. We need to be restored or rejuvenated. Worship should be a place of refuge from the sorrows, trials, and tribulations of life that have such a draining effect on us. We live in a nerve wracking, pressure packed world. Worship should be a time when we recharge our spiritual batteries. So often in worship we are like Isaiah. We see our sinful selves in comparison with God and feel the need of spiritual cleansing. We need then, the restoration spoken of by Paul in Gal 6:1. We can receive it by confessing our faults and praying for one another. (Jas 5:16)

G. Worship should also be a time when we are able to get a sense of direction. Isaiah declared in Isa 6:8, here am I Lord send me. He got a sense of purpose by entering the presence of God. Life without God is truly without meaning. Get involved in God's work and life will be worth living!

H. Finally, worship in this life prepares us for worship in heaven. That is right. Heaven will be a place where we will be worshipping God eternally. If we don't enjoy worshipping God now, we would be miserable in heaven. See the following verses:
1. Rev 7:9
2. Rev 22:3

Con: Let us say then with David in Psms 122:1, "I was glad when they said unto me, come now and let us go up into the house of the Lord."

The Collection

Intro: 1. Someone has observed that when it comes to the subject of giving, many are like the rich young ruler, they go away sorrowfully.
2. Yet, the subject of giving is the most often discussed topic in the New Testament.
3. Could it be that the Christian religion can be summed up in one word, giving? I think so.
4. Our text is I Cor 16:1–2.

5. Let us now break our text down into its component parts and analyze it, especially from a language standpoint.

I Let Us First Consider The Word "Collection"

A. This word is often rendered, "contribution" in many translations.
B. The King James Version in verse three calls it a "gift or liberality."
C. The American Standard Version calls it "bounty" in verse 3.
D. Consider a little background for this contribution now. In Acts 11:27–28 we are told that Agabus foretold that a great famine would come upon the world.
E. The church in Antioch responded to this need. The text says, "And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren, who dwelt in Judaea, which they did, sending it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."
F. Paul used the example of the Antioch church to get other Gentile churches to help the saints and other poor in Jerusalem. See Rom 15:26.
G. It may well of been that he started this fund raising effort in Corinth and Galatia.

II Notice Now The Word "saint"

A. It means, "a holy one."
B. Paul addressed his Roman letter to the saints in Rome. (Rom 1:7)
C. Why was Paul so concerned about taking a collection for the saints?
   1. From Gal 2:10 we learn that he was told by Peter, James, and John to be zealous in caring for the poor.
   2. Many of the Jerusalem saints shared their goods with their new brethren in the Lord after Pentecost. (Acts 2:44–45) To be hit with a famine then would

be a double blow to their physical welfare. Perhaps this was another reason, Paul was so concerned.

3. One other reason may have been in the mind of Paul. The Hebrew writer tells us that the early Christians took joyfully the spoiling of their possessions. (Heb 10:34) Many of them became impoverished because of persecution. Again, the famine would be an extra measure of hardship. They would need all the help that they could get.

D. Does this text in verse one teach that Christians can help saints only? I don't think so. Paul in writing of this collection in II Cor 9:13 spoke of the liberality of their contribution unto them (saints) and unto all men. Furthermore, Paul said, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, and especially them that are of the household of faith." (Gal 6:10)

III Next Consider The Word "Order"

A. This word is a military term. It means, "a directive or command. It is a word denoting obedience to authority."

B. This order had been given to the churches of Galatia. They were located in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Psidium.

C. When was this order given? It is not found in the Galatian epistle. Paul may have given it by word of mouth or in a letter that we do not have.

D. The phrase, "even so do ye" indicates that there was a pattern that was in the process of forming. This was not a one time affair.

IV This Collection Was To Be Taken "Upon The First Day Of The Week"

A. Why? What is so special about this day?

B. This was Jesus' resurrection day. (Mk 16:2) He appeared at least twice upon the first day of the week following his resurrection. (Jno 20:19, 26) This day was called the Lord's day. (Rev 1:10)

C. The church began on Pentecost which fell on the first day of the week. (Acts 2)

D. The Lord's Supper was observed on the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7)

E. The original language here is "kata mian sabbatou." Literally translated it is, "upon the first day of EVERY week."

F. Thus, our giving is to be regular and that makes it easier. It is much more convenient to give smaller sums on a regular basis, than to get up a lump sum on a particular date.

V Observe Now The Phrase "Each One Of You"

A. From this phrase we learn that giving is an individual responsibility.

B. Regardless of one's income or ability to give, we must all participate in the matter of giving. Acts 11:29–30 that we noted earlier said that "every man" according to his ability determined to send relief to their fellowmen.

VI "Lay By Him In Store" Is The Next Phrase To Consider

A. Literally the phrase reads, "Let him keep on laying by in store." Note also the fact that the verb is in the imperative or command mood.

B. Some have thought that the laying by should be at home. But where do they find that in our text or in the context? The Bible nowhere indicates that our giving is to be done at home.

C. The text says that we are to lay by in "store." The word "store" means "treasury." The Jews were to bring their tithes into the "storehouse." (Mal 3:8–10) The widow put her two mites into the "treasury" in Mk 12:44.

D. How are we to lay by? From II Cor 9:6–7 we learn that are to lay by bountifully. We are to lay by as those who have pruposed in their hearts. We should give not grudgingly or of necessity but with cheerfulness of heart!

VII Finally, We Must Give "As We Have Prospered"

A. The King James Version says, "As God hath prospered him."
  1. God is the giver of all good things. (Jas 1:17)
  2. See also I Tim 6:17 and Jno 15:5

B. Notice that God does not set a certain percentage that men are to give. That eliminates the Old Testament practice of tithing or the giving of a tenth. Thus, a man might make five hundred dollars one week and one hundred dollars another week. The week that he made the five hundred dollars he prospered and should give accordingly. When he made the one hundred dollars, he prospered little and again should give accordingly. The more you make the more you should give. The less you make the less you give.

C. The word "prosper" means, "gain, to have income, a salary, bonus, or dividend."

D. Paul issued these instructions so that "there would be no collections, when he came." He did not want to have to go around from house to house collecting this money.

Con: We have just examined God's plan for raising the monies needed to carry on the work of the church. It is perfect and needs no improvement.

Postscripts

Tertullian

These contributions are the trust funds of piety. For they are not spent on banquets, drinking parties, or dining clubs: but for feeding and burying the poor, for boys and girls destitute of property and parents: and further for old people confined to the house, and victims of shipwreck, and any who are in the mines, who are exiled to an island, or who are in prison merely on account of God's church these become the wards of their confession. So great a work of love burns a brand upon us in regard to some. "See," they say, "How they love one another."

Aristides

The Christians love one another. They do not overlook the widow and they save the orphan. He who has, ministers ungrudgingly to him that has not. When they see strangers, they take him under their roof and rejoice after him as a true brother, for they do not call themselves brothers after the flesh but after the soul. And whenever they see that one of their poor has died each one of them according to this ability contributes ungrudgingly and they bury him. And if they hear that some are condemned or imprisoned on account of the name of their Lord, they contribute for those condemned and send to them what they need, and if it is possible, they redeem them. And if there is any that is a slave or a poor man, they fast two or three days and what they were going to set before themselves they send to them, considering themselves to give good cheer even as they were called to good cheer.

Singing

Intro: 1. Following the institution of the Lord's Supper, our Lord sang a hymn with the Apostles and went out into the mount of Olives. (Mt 26:30) What did they sing? Who led the singing? We do not know.

2. Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto

God while in prison. (Acts 16:25)
3. We are to sing with the spirit and with the understanding. (I Cor 14:15)
4. We are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16) Someone has drawn these lines of distinction between the terms psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Psalms were probably the Old Testament Psalms. Hymns are songs directed to God and Christ. They are songs of praise and devotion. Spiritual songs are directed towards our fellow Christians.
5. James 5:13 says that if we are merry, we are to sing psalms.
6. Christians then were a singing people.

I The Purpose Of Singing

A. Why do we sing? Many brethren have never asked this question.
B. We sing to teach. We are to teach and admonish one another through our songs. (Col 3:16) It is believed that I Tim 3:16 was one of the early Christian hymns. It is one of the most instructive verses in the Bible. Furthermore, Paul told us that all that we did in worship was to be edifying. (I Cor 14:26)
C. We sing to admonish. (Col 3:16) This word means, "to encourage, to warn, to exhort." Invitation songs are used to admonish.
D. We sing to praise, adore, and to offer thanks.
  1. In the midst of the church, we are to sing praise. (Heb 2:12)
  2. See also Rom 15:9
E. Our commitment to God is expressed through song. Paul and Silas demonstrated their dedication to God by singing after they had been beaten and cast into prison. (Acts 16:25)
F. Singing shows that we are filled with the Spirit. (Eph 5:18–19)
G. It also shows that we are filled with the word of God.

(Col 3:16)

H. We offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God through our singing. (Heb 13:15)

I. Singing also prepares us for heaven. There will be a lot of singing in heaven. (Rev 5:9)

II The Manner Of Singing

A. We must sing what some call "A Capella," which means, "in the manner of the church."

B. We sing unto God. (Acts 16:25)

C. We sing with the spirit and with the understanding. (Jno 4:24, I Cor 14:15)

D. We are to sing according to the truth. (Jno 4:24)

E. We also should sing and make melody in our heart to the Lord. (Eph 5:19)

F. We should sing with grace in our hearts. (Col 3:16)

III Arguments For The Use Of Instrumental Music

A. Some say that since it was used in the Old Testament that it should be allowed in the New Testament.

1. If righteousness is through the law then Christ died for nothing. (Gal 2:21)
2. Those seeking to be justified by the law will fall from the grace of God. (Gal 5:4)
3. See also Heb 7:12
4. Good reader if we can take instrumental music out of the Old Testament, what about the Sabbath day, the Tabernacle, Temple, incense, and animal sacrifices? Are we not equally bound to include these things in the church, if we include instrumental music? If not, why not?
5. Some people argue that instrumental music is only an aid. An aid is that which violates no principle of worship. When you add instrumental worship, you do not just sing. You play and sing. You are adding another kind of music. A songbook is an aid because it is not another kind of music.
6. Many turn to the book of Revelation and argue that

if instrumental music is used in heaven, why can't it be used in the church on earth? In Rev 5:8 we read about harps and golden vials of incense which are the prayers of the saints. The harps are just as literal as the vials of incense. Revelation is a book filled with symbols. John uses the word "sign" in Rev 1:1. It means, "a symbol or figure." In Mt 22:30–31 Jesus tells us that in the resurrection there will be no marriage, for we shall be as the angels in heaven. Now there is no marriage in heaven. Shall we eliminate all marriage from the church because it will not be in heaven? From passages like Mt 18:3, 19:14 we learn that little children are not lost. They are innocent and sinless. When babies die, heaven will be their ultimate home. Now there are going to be babies in heaven. Does that mean that we should have babies in the church as members?

7. Some say that instrumental music should be in the church, so that people can use their God given talents. Well I know people who have a talent to box, whistle, or play the spoons. Should we allow boxing, whistling and spoon playing in the church?
8. Many argue that if instrumental music is right in the home, it should be right in the church. Non-religious songs are right in the home, but are they right in the church? We are to sing spiritual songs according to Eph 5:19.

F. We love instrumental music, therefore, we should have it in the church. Well, I love peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and Coca Cola. Does that mean that I should replace the bread and the fruit of the vine on the Lord's table with what I love? No! Well that is the same kind of logic that this argument uses.

G. There are those who argue that the Greek word "psallo" means to sing and play. Yet, there is no translation like the King James and the American Standard

Versions, which were translated by committees of Hebrew and Greek scholars, which renders the word "psallo" as sing and play. Name one.

H. Finally, there will always be someone who will argue that there is no passage that says, thou shalt not use instrumental music. Using that kind of logic, we can also conclude that it's okay to kiss the Pope's toe. The Bible does not tell us not to do it.

VI We Must Reject The Use Of Instrumental Music

A. To use instrumental music is to violate the authority of Christ. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. (Mt 28:18) He nowhere authorized the use of instrumental music but by his own example (Mt 26:30) taught us that we were to praise God through singing.

B. The use of instrumental music goes beyond that which is written. We are not to do that. (I Cor 4:6)

C. The New Testament is clear in its instruction to sing. This is not my opinion but what the Bible says.

D. There is no passage in the New Testament that commands instrumental music. There is no example of a church using it. There is no verse that would hint or infer that it be used.

E. If God would have said make music, then man would be free to play, sing, or both. God specified singing. That eliminates all other kinds of music.

F. We cannot use instrumental music and walk by faith. (II Cor 5:7) Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. (Rom 10:17) God says nothing about it in the New Testament.

G. You cannot worship God in spirit and in truth and use it. (Jno 4:24) When you praise God with the human voice, you praise him with the spirit or inner man. The only instrument that God will accept is the heart. It can do what a mechanical instrument cannot do. To worship God in truth is to worship God in harmony with his word, which does not authorize anything but the human voice. (Jno 17:17)

H. You cannot teach or admonish with an instrument. That is one of the basic purposes of singing. (Col 3:16)

I. Throughout the history of the church, instrumental music has been a source of division. Can anyone deny that? (Eph 4:3)

Con: As we think about instrumental music and vocal music, it is not a question of whether we like or dislike them. It is not a question of whether we sing better with instrumental music or vocal music. The number of people who use either one is not important. The morality or sincerity of those who use instrumental music or vocal music is not being called into question. My good reader, it is a matter of what does God want and what does the Bible teach.

The Lord's Supper

Intro: 1. The Lord's Supper is one of the most misunderstood doctrines of the Bible.

2. There are many false doctrines connected with the Lord's Supper. We hear people talking about open or closed communion. Many believe that only the clergy can administer the elements. Others are told that they must go to confession before communion. Terms like mass, transubstantiation, consubstantion, and sacrament are used in connection with the Lord's Supper. Where do we read about these things in the Bible? Still others are now taking communion in connection with marriage.

3. Many in the church of Christ seem to think that the Lord's Supper is the most important item of worship.

I The Institution Of The Lord's Supper

A. It was instituted while Jesus and the Apostles were eating the Passover meal. This meal consisted of items like the paschal lamb, bitter herbs, a paste made of fruit and nuts, and the unleavened bread with four cups of wine.

B. Mt 26:26–30 teaches us that Jesus used the unleavened bread to symbolize his body and the cup or wine to represent the blood of the covenant or testament, which was to be poured out for many for the remission of sins.

C. Now let us take a look at the elements of the supper in a more detailed fashion.

   1. First there was the unleavened bread. No unleavened bread was to be found in the house during the Passover. Those who would not do so would be cut off from Israel. The "unleavened bread" is also called, "the loaf." We read of "the breaking of bread" in the New Testament. Often one will find the phrase, "the breaking of bread" without seeing anything about the fruit of the vine. This is called "metonomy." In other words, "a part standing for the whole"' The bread of course symbolizes the body of Christ that was crucified for our salvation. We are to partake of the bread in remembrance of that fact. (I Cor 11:25)
   2. Secondly, there is the "cup." The "cup" is also called, "the fruit of the vine or wine." The word "cup" does not refer to the container but the contents. We are to drink the "cup" in remembrance of the blood of Christ that was shed on Calvary's cross for the remission of our sins. (I Cor 11:25)
   3. Good reader, I hope that you are impressed with the simplicity and the universality of these elements. All men can have access to them.
   4. We must also point out that these elements are symbolic and not the literal flesh and blood of Christ. Jesus said in John 10:9 that he was a door. Was he a literal door? In John 15:1 Christ declared himself to be a vine. Is he a literal vine?

5. Our Catholic friends teach the so called doctrine of "transubstantiation." This doctrine was accepted by the fourth Latern council in 1215 A.D. It says that when the priest blesses the bread and the wine that they become the literal flesh and blood of Christ. They say that when this happens, Jesus' body and blood are sacrificed again in a non-bloody way. Those who partake of these elements according to Catholic doctrine have their sins forgiven and receive an extra measure of grace. The Bible does not talk of a repeated sacrifice of Christ's body and blood in the observance of communion. The Bible teaches that we can crucify Christ afresh, but not through communion. We do so by living unfaithful Christian lives. (Heb 6:4–6) Heb 9:28 tells us that Christ has been once offered to bear the sins of many. Yes, he has been offered once, not over and over again for all. (Heb 10:10)

II What Is The Lord's Supper?

A. Let us answer this question by looking at various terms used in connection with it.
   1. It is not a sacrament. A sacrament is a so called Christain ordinance that manifests in inward grace, through an outward symbol.
   2. It is not mass. This word comes from the Latin word "missa." It means, "to send away."
   3. Some call it the "Euchrist." This word comes from the Greek word "euchristo" which means, "to give thanks." The Bible does not use this term to describe it.
   4. The Lord's Supper is called the "Lord's Supper." It was instituted during the Passover meal by our Lord. (I Cor 11:20)
   5. "The breaking of bread" is another phrase used to denote by metonymy the Lord's Supper. (Acts 2:42, 20:7)
   6. In I Cor 10:21 Paul calls it the "Lord's table."

7. "Communion" is another Bible term for the supper. (I Cor 10:16)

B. The Lord's Supper is a memorial. When we partake of it, we are to remember the body and blood of Christ, offered in our stead. (I Cor 11:24–25)

C. It is also a proclamation. We are proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes. (I Cor 11:26) Really we proclaim the following:

1. What Christ has done-died
2. What he is doing-fellowshipping with us
3. What he will do-come again
4. That the Old Testament has been fulfilled
5. That we are now living under the New Testament
6. That God loves us very much
7. That Christ is sinless
8. That the Kingdom of God has come

III Why Should We Observe The Lord's Supper?

A. We are commanded to observe it. (I Cor 11:24)

B. Its observance is essential to eternal life. (Jno 6:53–54)

C. We must partake of it to proclaim our unity with Christ and one another. (I Cor 10:16–17)

IV How Should We Observe The Lord's Supper?

A. Let us first notice how not to observe it. We should not come together for the worse as did the Corinthians. They were divided and factionalized. They perverted the love feast by their ungodly attitudes towards their fellow Christians. They were then partaking of the elements in an unworthy manner. (I Cor 11:17–22, 27) Do not think that in these verses Paul is condemning the eating of Christians in a church building. He was condemning the way they were eating and not where they were eating. After all there were no church buildings in early Christianity.

B. Now let us observe the proper way to partake of the communion. In I Cor 11:27–29 Paul wrote, "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat the bread or drink of the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto themselves, if they discern not the Lord's body." From these verses then, we learn that we are to partake of it in a worthy manner. We also note that we are to prove ourselves before partaking of the supper. Finally, we must discern the Lord's body. The elements are not mere food to be consumed to satisfy the body. They are to cause the communicant to remember the death, resurrection, and second coming of Christ.

V When Are We To Observe The Lord's Supper?

A. The Lord's Supper was instituted on a Thursday night, God's people never observed it on any day other than the first day of the week.

B. The early Church met on a regular basis. In I Cor 11:20 Paul spoke of the church coming together to partake of the Lord's Supper. In I Cor 14:23 Paul wrote of the whole church coming together. Upon the first day of the week the early Christians gave of their means. (I Cor 16:1–2) Christians are not to forsake the assemblying of themselves together. (Heb 10:25) John wrote that he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. (Rev 1:10) This day was called the Lord's day no doubt because of the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week.

C. The early Christians continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread. (Acts 2:42) They broke bread on the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7) From Acts 20:16 we learn that Paul was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem. Yet, he tarried seven days to meet with the saints in Troas. While there he broke bread and preached. Now if Paul could have eaten the Lord's Supper with the brethren on any other day, surely he would have done so. He waited because, it was not proper to observe it on any other day than Sunday. Paul also tarried seven days on two other occasions. (Acts 21:4, 28:13–14)

D. Thus, Christian should observe the Lord's Supper each Sunday. The whole tenor of the scriptures and the testimony of the so called church fathers point to a weekly observance, which men changed several centuries after Pentecost.

Con: In partaking of the Lord's Supper, we are to look inward or examine ourselves. We also look backward to Christ's death. We look upward when we give thanks, outward when we proclaim his death until he comes, and forward, when we look for his second coming.

The Proclamation of The Word

Intro: 1. The pulpit certainly is one of the focal points of our buildings. Few brethren have ever given much thought to the roll of preaching in our worship services. Whether we admit it or not, it has become the dominant item of worship. More time is alotted to it than any other act of worship.

2. The word of God in our worship services is read and proclaimed and that is as it should be. Let us not discuss the proclamation of the word through these two means.

I First Of All Note The Biblical Emphasis On Bible Reading

A. Deut 31:11 says that the law was read before all Israel.

B. Joshua read all the law before Israel entered Canaan. (Josh 8:35)

C. In II Kings 23:2, Josiah read all of God's will to the people.

D. Ezra read the law to the people and they were so respectful, that they stood up, as they gave heed to its reading. (Ezra 9:3, 5)
E. Jesus entered as his custom was into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. (Lk 4:16)
F. Paul was given an opportunity to speak after the reading of the law and the prophets in the synagogue. (Acts 13:15)
G. Paul told the church in Colossae that the Colossian epistle was to be read among them, then it was to be read to the church in Laodicea. (Col 4:16)
H. In I Thess 5:21 Paul told the Thessalonians that his epistle to them needed to be read unto all the brethren.
I. Paul's advice to Timothy is good advice to all. He said, give heed to reading. (I Tim 4:13)
J. Justin Martyr said that the memoirs of the Apostles and the writing of the prophets were read as long as time permitted. He also indicated that a regular, consecutive reading of the Bible occupied a principle place in the worship service.
K. In my judgment, we must establish the reading of the Bible in our worship services.

II The Preaching Of The Word

A. Paul preached in a worship service in Troas on the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7)
B. Paul told Timothy to preach the word. (II Tim 4:2) He did not say to preach on theology, economics, politics, philosophy, or psychology.
C. The Emperor Julian observed the pagan religious empire in decline. He called the priests together and charged them to preach each week as the Christians do.
D. Justin wrote that after the reading of the Bible, a leader in the sermon admonished the people to imitate the good things written in the Bible. It is also my impression that the preaching tended to be of an expository nature.

III The Value Of Bible Reading And Preaching

A. Ignorance is a curse! God's people were destroyed for a lack of knowledge. (Hos 4:6) Christ was crucified in part by ignorance. (Acts 3:17) God will not overlook ignorance. (Acts 17:30–31)

B. Bible knowledge will meet basic human needs. II Pet 1:3 says, that God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Christ, as revealed in the Bible. The scriptures make the man of God perfect. They throughly furnish him unto all good works. (II Tim 3:16–17) God's word will meet such basic human needs as:

1. The need to be aware of sin in our lives and its ultimate consequences. (Rom 1:16, 6:23) The Bible tells us how to get forgiveness from our sins. (Mk 16:16)
2. Man needs to worship God. The scriptures tell us who man needs to worship and how he is to worship. (Jno 4:22–23, Acts 20:7, I Cor 16:1–2, Col 3:16, I Cor 14:15)
3. Humanity must learn to deal with those who make it up. The Book tells us how to do that. (Mt 22:39, I Pet 2:17, Mt 5:44, Eph 5:25, Titus 2:4)
4. People often grow discouraged and weary in this life. The Bible offers courage to those who are discouraged. Strength is given to the weak. Comfort is offered to the sorrowful. Hope can belong to those who despair. Life is available to those who are dying.
5. God's word is a lamp to those who are in darkness. (Psm 119:105) It is a mirror to those who need to see themselves, as they really are. (Jas 1:23) Food for the soul, that is what the BIble is. (Lk 4:4) It is our sword. (Heb 4:12, Eph 6:17) The word is a fire that will purge our lives from all dross and impurity. It is God's hammer that can break our stubborn human will. (Jer 23:29)
6. The word of the true and living God is something that we can stand on. (Mt 7:24–27) It is something

to live by. (Jno 6:63) It is something that we can die by. (Phil 1:16–23) It is certainly that which we will be judged by. (Rom 2:2, Jno 17:17, Jno 12:48, Rom 2:16) Man would be nothing but a poor wayfaring stranger in this life, if he did not have God's precious word to act as his spiritual road map or compass.

IV Christians Have A Responsibility To Listen To The Word Of God

A. My friends when the Bible is read or preached, God is speaking!

B. There can be no salvation without listening.

1. Rom 10:17 says, that faith cometh by hearing.
2. Paul asked, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? (Gal 3:2)
3. See also Mt 7:24–26, Mk 4:24, Lk 8:18
4. Don't forget Jas 1:22, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your ownselves."
5. Some people hear with an umbrella. Everything said from the word of God falls on others around them. It never seems to have application in their lives. Others hear with a pitchfork. They too are always throwing the word back to others. But thank God there are those who hear with a rake. They rake the word into their own lives and make personal application. What kind of a hearer are you? Let us not listen with an attitude which says, don't confuse me with the facts. My mind is already made up. We must throw our pride and rebellious nature into the depths of the sea. Away with all that would cloud the mind and keep it from seeing the light of the gospel! Away with Satan, sin, and all forms of ignorance. (II Cor 4:4, Rom 5:12, Acts 17:30–31). Let us with courage and conviction strive to know, buy, and obey the truth. (Jno 8:32, Prov 23:23, I Tim 2:4) Let us be wise men. (Mt 7:24–25) Let us search the scriptures daily. (Acts 17:11) Prove all

things and hold fast to that which is good. (I Thess 5:21) There are so many false prophets in the world that we must put them to the test. (Mt 7:15–20, I Jno 4:1) In order to achieve these goals, we must hear with an open mind.

Con: Let us never forget that God chose the force of ideas, rather than military might to win the world. Therefore, reading and preaching the word of God is very important part of our worship. In fact, the other acts of worship result from hearing God speak through the reading or preaching of the word.

Praying To God

Intro:
1. Prayer is an appraoch to deity in thought and word.
2. Prayer is a desire, the opportunity, and the privilege of talking with God.
3. Prayer is a wish turned heavenward.
4. Old Testament examples of prayer are these:
   a. Abraham prayed for Sodom. (Gen 18)
   b. Moses prayed for Israel. (Ex 32)
   c. Solomon prayed as he dedicated the temple. (I Kings 8)
   d. Hezekiah prayed for an extension of his life. (I Kings 20)
5. Familiar New Testament examples are these:
   a. John the Baptist taught his disciples to pray. (Lk 11:1)
   b. The Apostles wanted to learn to pray. (Lk 11:1)
   c. Jesus was and is the great example. He prayed in the desert early in the morning. (Mk 1:25) He prayed on a mountain. (Mk 6:46) He prayed all night to God. (Lk 6:12) He prayed intercessory prayers. (Jno 17) He prayed in agony in the

garden before the cross. (Mt 26)

d. The church followed Jesus' example. They continued steadfastly in prayer. (Acts 2:42, 6:4) They prayed for those in prison. (Acts 12:5) They prayed as they ordained elders. (Acts 14:23) They prayed as they sent missionaries on their way. (Acts 13:3) They prayed in such a fashion that the unlearned could understand and say amen. (I Cor 14:15–16)

6. Surely in these verses we find many principals that should be used to guide the New Testament church in prayer as it worships God.

I Principles Of Prayer From Jesus

A. Mt 6:5–7 teaches us that we are not to pray openly and with vain repetitions as the hypocrites. We are to pray in secret.

B. Our prayers are to be addressed to the Father. (Mt. 6:9)

C. We are to allow or praise the name of God in prayer. (Mt 6:9)

D. We should have petitions about the kingdom of God and God's will. (The kingdom of God has already come. It is the church. The word kingdom also means simply the rule of God in the human heart. We could pray for the kingdom of God to come into the hearts of those who are yet lost.) (Mt 6:10)

E. We must pray for earthly needs. (Daily bread is one of them.) (Mt 6:11)

F. Prayer should also be used to ward off temptation. (Mt 6:13)

G. Persistence and faith are needed in successful prayer. (Mt 7:7, Lk 18:1, Mt 17:20, 21:22)

H. The so called Lord's prayer is a model indeed. It contains only sixty-nine words. It can be read in thirty seconds. It is simple and direct.

II Principles Of Prayer From The Apostles

A. I Cor 14:15 teaches us that we must pray with:

1. The spirit – Our worship must be in spirit and in truth. That is it must come from the inner man. (Jno 4:23–24)
2. The understanding – That is our worship must be understood by us and by those who participate with us, who may be unlearned. (I Cor 14:15–16) Worship must be carried on by those who know the truth which is God's word. (Jno 4:24, 17:17)

B. I Tim 2:1–2 teaches us that prayer should have four things that make it up.

1. "Supplication" is a word means, "to offer a prayer or a specific petition. It is also rendered desire or wish in the Bible."
2. "Prayer" is a synonym with supplication at times. "It is often used of general petitions to God."
3. "Intercession" is a word that means, "to beg or plea on behalf of another. It depicts the idea of a defense counsel standing before a jury in an effort to convince them of his client's innocence." (Rom 10:1, Heb 7:25)
4. "Thanksgiving" should be part of every prayer. We are to give thanks in all things. (Eph 5:20)

C. I Tim 2:1–2 also teaches us who to pray for.

1. We are to pray for all men. This includes the lost, saved, sick, aged, depressed, yea even our enemies.
2. We are to especially to pray for those in high place. That is people in governmental positions and people in places of great authority in whatever field of endeavor. (I Pet 2:13–17, Rom 13:1–7)
3. We are to pray for these people so that we may all be able to lead tranquil and quiet lives with all godliness and gravity.

D. I Tim 2:8 is a verse that teaches us that men only are to lead in prayer.

1. Paul uses the Greek word "andros." This word is used to denote the male sex only. It excudes the female. This is in contrast to a word like "anthropos"

which can be translated man and include womankind as well.

  2. In a few more verses Paul in I Tim 2:12–13 permits not a woman to teach nor usurp the authority of the man. The reason given for restricting the teaching and preaching of women also has application to I Tim 2:8 which places some restrictions on the prayer life of women. Paul links the restrictions to the role that mother Eve played in plunging the human race into sin in the garden of Eden!
  3. Note also that in I Tim 2:8 Paul said that men were to pray in "every place." Everyplace includes public and private worship.
  4. Paul also taught us in this verse that those who lead in prayer must have "holy hands." That is their life must be pure and free from willful and habitual sin! (Psm 24:3–4) It also means that he is free from wrath and disputing, as Paul so plainly stated in the text.

E. James also has some very helpful suggestions that we must heed in prayer.
  1. Jas 1:5–8 teaches us that prayer can be a source of wisdom. If we will ask for it God will give it in abundance. He will not upbraid or chide us. But James teaches that our prayers must be in faith, nothing doubting. The doubter is an unstable man and will receive nothing. He is a doubleminded or doublesouled! That is what the Greek language says.
  2. Jas 5:16–18 tells Christians that prayer and confession can bring spiritual healing to our souls. This is to be done publically. It is to be done with the conviction that effectual and fervent prayer is able to accomplish much. Ejijah is a good example of the power of prayer. He was a man just like us. He prayed and asked God to withold rain. God witheld the rain. He again prayed and asked God to send the rain. God sent the rain. Truly, there is grace and

mercy at the throne of God to meet our each and every need. (Heb 4:16)

F. John the Apostle of love has given us some of the most wonderful prayer concepts in all the Bible.
   1. We can ask and receive of God, if we keep his commandments and do that which pleases him. (I Jno 3:22)
   2. We must ask all things according to God's will and he will hear us. (I Jno 5:14)
   3. John teaches us to pray for those brethren who are sinning not unto death and God will give them life. He also teaches that there is a sin unto death and we are not to pray for those who are committing it. (I Jno 5:16)

G. John also gives us some of Jesus' teaching concerning prayer.
   1. If we will ask anything in Jesus' name, he will do it. (Jno 14:14, 16:23)
   2. God wants to answer our prayers so that our joy can be made full. (Jno 16:24)

Con: Someone has written, "The prayerfulness of the Apostolic Church of Christ is not something to behold, to admire, but to imitate! What the church needs is no more machinery, schemes, novel methods, and spectacular devices, but the power of God through prayer. The twentieth century church as the first century church will multiply and move forward in a very dynamic way only when it marches on its knees." Amen!

SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS

Father Forgive Them

Intro: This morning we come to Golgotha, a place of curssing and blessing. A blessing to us and a curse to Jesus. At Golgotha we see man at his worst and God at his best. On this skull shaped hill we see the awful depth of human sin and the height of divine love. On its top are three crosses. In the center there is the greatest man that ever lived. He was and is more than a man. He is God in the robe of human flesh. Born of a virgin some thirty-three years ago in fulfillment of a prophecy made by Isaiah. He was raised in Nazareth. He was baptized by John in the river Jordan. His life was sinless. Now he is hated by the Jews. Now hate has risen to hellish heights as he is condemned to death by crucifixion. Now upon Calvary's cross he begins to speak. We are all interested in the last words of dying men. Let us now consider what he has to say. Our text is Lk 23:33–34. We shall now break it down and analyze it.

I He Said

A. The verb form "to say" is used here in the imperfect tense. Literally it is, "he kept on saying." Note also that this first saying is directed towards his enemies. The second is addressed to a sinner, the third to a saint, and etc.

B. **As Jesus climbed Golgotha the people were clamouring for His blood. A burly Roman centurion threw His body to the ground. He then took hideous spikes and drove them unmercifully into His hands and feet, slicing through His quivering flesh. Then that cross that weighed as much as two hundred pounds was allowed** to fall with a dull thud into a three foot hole. The body of God's son began to sag and sway against the nails. The soldiers then gambled for his garments beneath the cross, while the people mocked and jeered.

C. While all this was taking place, Jesus kept on uttering his prayer. This was in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:12 which foretold that he would make intercession for the transgressors. Thank God we can say that he still ever lives to make intercession for us. (Heb 7:25)

D. In uttering this prayer, Jesus was practicing what he was preaching. He said that men ought always to pray and not to faint. (Lk 18:1) Jesus also instructed us to love our enemies and pray for them that persecute us. (Mt 5:44) "Bless them that curse you and despitefully use you." These were the words of our Lord. (Lk 6:28) When Jesus was reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not. (I Pet 2:22–23)

E. Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. (Mt 4:23) But now those hands that blessed the children, that ministered to the sick and poor are nailed to the cross. Those feet which ran so many errands of mercy and that brought glad tidings of good things are fastened by spikes of perdition to the tree. What then can the ministering Master do? He can and does pray! Perhaps because of age or sickness, you are not able to do for the Lord what you once did. What can you do? Pray! The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (Jas 5:16) Jesus left us an example and we should follow in his steps. (I Pet 2:21)

II Father

A. Jesus never lost faith in the heavenly Father. He believed that the Father was in control of all things.

B. So when they put a blindfold over his eyes (Mt 26:67), Jesus believed that his Father saw all. When the hard hands of men beat Jesus across the face (Mt 26:67), Chrsit never forget the hand of his Father. When they placed a reed in his hand for a scepter, Christ never wavered in his belief that his Father had all power in heaven and on earth. He knew that someday the Father would give it all to the Son. (Mt 28:18, I Cor 15:28) Though men placed a crown of thorns on Jesus' head, our Lord knew that soon the Father would crown him Lord of Lords and King of Kings. (Rev 17:14)

C. Good reader, in Jesus' blackest and darkest hour, his faith shone forth like a brilliant star against the midnight sky. We should learn from this. When right is trampled underfoot and wrong triumphant, when truth is on the scaffold and falsehood is on the throne, men are tempted to ask where God is. What is God doing? God is at work in human history. (Dan 4:24) He is working providentially in the lives of his children. Nothing can work against us or overcome us, if we love him and are called according to his purpose. (Rom 8:28, 31) The Lord God, the almighty reigneth! (Rev 19:6)

D. Someone has written these words:

> "Truth forever on the scaffold
> Wrong forever on the throne
> But someday that truth shall sway the future
> And behind the dim unknown
> Standeth God amidst the shadows
> Watching o'er his own"

III Forgive Them For They Know Not What They Do

A. Notice that Jesus does not curse his crucifiers. He does not plead for release or beg for mercy. Christ does not pray for self but for others. He prayed for the Jews who clamoured for his blood. He prayed for Herod who robed him in the garment of a fool. He prayed for Pilate, who chose the will of the people over the will of God. He petitioned the Father for those who smote him as he stood before Caiphas and for the soldiers who nailed him to the cross. I believe that he prayed for all of us who played a role in sending Christ to the cross.

B. It should be made clear that this was not winking at ignorance. It was not a blanket request for a mass pardon. Forgiveness is an individual matter. Paul said that each one of us should give an account of himself unto God. (Rom 14:12) Jesus was not asking the Father to forgive those who did not want to be forgiven. There were some in Jesus' day. (Jno 5:40)

C. Let us stress the fact that these people really did not know what they were doing.
   1. Peter in his second recorded sermon said in Acts 3:17, "Now brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."
   2. Paul in I Cor 2:8 declared, "Which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."
   3. Though they did not know, they should have known. Jesus fulfilled over three hundred Old Testament prophecies. John the Baptist pointed to Chrsit as the Lamb of God that cometh to take away the sins of the world. (Jno 1:29) Jesus was sinless. (Jno 8:46) No man ever taught as he taught. (Mt 7:28–29) His miracles proved him to be the Son of God. (Acts 2:22)

D. Christ's prayer for forgiveness was answered fifty days later on Pentecost. There Peter took the keys and opened the door of the Kingdom of God.
   1. Peter declared that God the Father had made Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2:36)
   2. Peter's message "pricked" their hearts. They realized that they were lost. They wanted to know what to do to obtain forgiveness. (Acts 2:37)
   3. Under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit and

with Apostolic authority Peter declared, "Repent ye, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

Con: From this text we should learn that nothing and no one lies beyond the reach of prayer. We learn that we should pray for our enemies and the lost. Certainly this lesson teaches us that ignorance is not innocence and will not be excused in judgment.

Jesus Remember Me

Intro:

1. Today we come to Calvary, the most sacred place in all the world. It was here that God's Son died. His rich, red, royal, ruby blood was shed for our sins on this hill. Calvary is a place where angels wept and devils rejoiced. On the hill shaped like a skull all the sins of humanity were laid upon him who knew no sin. This sacred spot is where all men can come and bathe their troubled souls and find the peace that passeth all understanding.
2. Now let us listen carefully as Jesus speaks a second time from the cross.
3. Our text is Lk 23:39–43
4. It was no accident that Christ was crucified between two thieves. (Isa 53:12)
5. In our text we see the two basic responses of man towards Jesus. Here two thieves, both were crucified together. They were both equally near Jesus. They both saw and heard the same things. They were both wicked, suffering, and dying. Yet, one was saved the other was lost. The same thing happens today. Men with equal opportunity will respond in

the same two ways.

I The First Theif

A. He was a "malefactor." That is a thief, robber, or evil worker.

B. He "railed" on Jesus. That means that he heaped abusive speech on our Lord. This was in the form or reproach, insults, and ridicule.
   1. Mt 27:44
   2. Mk 15:32

C. He was on the brink of eternity. Think of it! He was mocking, scoffing, and scorning the Son of God! Here we see the height of wickedness and the deceitfulness of sin.
   1. Jer 17:9
   2. Rom 3:10–12, Heb 3:13

D. He was a selfish man. (Lk 23:39)

E. We will not profit from this lesson unless we can see ourselves as this thief. God gives us air, water, sunshine, breath, time, talents, and opportunities. When we use them for Satan rather than Christ, we are stealing from God. They are his blessings and are to be used for his honor and glory. We are to fear God and keep his commandments. This is the whole duty of man. (Ecc 12:13) We cannot serve two masters. If we are not for God, we are against him. (Mt 6:24, 12:30)

F. We are all a heartbeat away from eternity. There is but a step between us and death. (I Sam 20:3) We mock, scorn, ridicule, and scoff at God, the only being in all the universe, who can save us from a Devil's hell, when we fail to live for Him. We are spiritually insane, if we think we can do so and get away with it.

II The Second Thief

A. This man looked beyond himself. He knew he could not save his own soul. All our righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. (Isa 64:6) Man cannot direct his own footsteps. (Jer 10:23) There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the ends thereof are the ways of death. (Prov. 14:12)

B. The thief believed somehow that God was in control of all things. He said to the first thief, dost thou not fear God? (Lk 23:40) The Lord God the almighty reigneth. That is one of the greatest truths in all the Bible. (Rev 19:6) God is in control.

C. This malefactor believed in future punishment. He said that they were both in condemnation and it was justly so. (Lk 23:40) Somehow I believe that all men whether they admit it or not, know that there must be a day of accounting for all the injustices of this life. The Bible is explicit in so teaching. See Prov 13:15, 22:8; Ezk 18:20, Jno 5:28–29, Rom 6:23, II Cor 5:10–11.

D. This robber also recognized and acknowledged his own sinfulness. He stated that they were justly receiving the due reward of their deeds. (Lk 23:41) All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)

E. He acknowledged the sinless nature of Jesus. He hath done nothing amiss, declared the second thief. (Lk 23:41) Jesus challenged the people of his day by saying, "which of you convicteth me of sin?" (Jno 8:46)

F. This lost soul furthermore, stated his belief in the Saviourhood and Kingship of Jesus in Lk 23:41. He called our Lord, Jesus. This name means Saviour. He also believed that Christ had a kingdom. Isn't it amazing that this evil man saw that Christ was King even though he had no throne but a cross, no crown but of thorns, and no sceptre but the nails that were piercing his hands!

G. Notice Jesus' answer. "Verily, I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise." (Lk 23:43) Let us take a closer look at this statement.

   1. "Verily" means "truly, so be it, or amen." In other words Jesus was saying that his declaration was fact and not fiction. In Rev 3:14 Christ is called the "Amen". He is truth. (Jno 14:6) Threfore, we can believe what he says.

2. "I" is a pronoun that acknowledges Jesus is indeed Saviour and King. It was his declaration of divinity. (Rev 17:14, Jno 1:1–3, 14)
3. "Today" is a word that the thief did not expect. He was thinking about the future. We should learn that the instant we die, our spirits are separated from our bodies and go into another world.
4. "Be with me" is a phrase that is filled with meaning. To die is to be at home with the Lord and this is better than anything we know in this life. (II Cor 5:8, Phil 1:23)
5. "Paradise" is not the grave as some contend. It is no lightless, windowless, hole in the ground! Jesus and the thief were not buried in the same grave. Paradise in this text is not heaven. How do we know? In Jno 20:17 Jesus said to Mary, "touch me not for I am not yet ascended to my Father." Furthermore, David in the Messianic Psalms foretold the fact that Jesus' soul would not be left in Hades and that his body would not corrupt in the tomb. (Psm 16:8, Acts 2:27) I am not saying that paradise is not used to refer to heaven in other texts because it does. (II Cor 12:12:4, Rev 2:7) But in our text it is used to refer to the intermediate state of the dead called hades.
6. Think of it! This man had left behind the ashes of a wasted life. Ahead there was fire and brimstone. His past had been characterized by the folly of sin and his future had nothing but an eternal hell in it. Behind was error and ahead was terror. Behind was gloom and ahead was nothing but everlasting doom. But now in a brief span of time he will be with Jesus in paradise. He is on the road that will lead him into the bliss of heaven.

H. But someone says, "This man was not baptized." That is right. "Well do you think he will go to heaven." Yes. Well someone says, "I want to be saved like the thief." By way of further comment on these statements and questions, let me say this.

1. First of all the thief lived and died under the Old Testament law. We do not live under the same law. We live under the New Testament. Look up these verses. (Gal 2:21, 5:4, Rom 7:4, Heb 7:12, 89: 15–17, II Cor 3:14) This law did not require baptism for salvation.
2. John the Baptist was preparing men to enter the kingdom of God that was at hand by baptizing people for the remission or forgiveness of sins in Mk 1:4. The thief could have been baptized by John. I don't know that to be the case but it is a possibility.
3. Let us not forget that Christ saved others while on earth. We can read of the palsied man in Mk 2 and the sinful woman in Lk 7. Why did our Lord save these and others while on earth? Mk 2:10 says that he did it so that he could show that he had power to forgive sins on earth. Why is it that no one wants to be saved like the palsied man or the sinful woman? It is because they show us why men were saved without baptism! Think about that.

III We Must Remember Jesus, If We Want Jesus To Remember Us

A. The Bible has something to say about the need to remember.
   1. Ecc 12:1
   2. Lk 24:8, II Tim 2:8

B. The greatest memorial of all time is the Lord's Supper. (I Cor 11:24–25)

C. We too like the thieves on the cross are lost and dying. We too need forgiveness. (Heb 5:8–9)

D. Jesus could have said this about the thieves. They deserve to die. They are wicked robbers. They have waited too. They should have come to me sooner. He could not say that because he taught, "He that cometh unto me, him will I in no wise cast out." (Jno 6:37)

God cannot lie. (Heb 6:18)

E. When we all get to heaven, we can stop by the mansion of this second thief. We can ask him about the events of Calvary. I am sure he would be glad to tell us all about it. Perhaps he will say:
   1. As I was dying I saw Jesus.
   2. I realized that he was more than a man. Hope leaped up into my heart. Suddenly, I cried out, Lord remember me!
   3. He said, today thou shalt be with me in paradise. I then forgot that I was dying. I hung there with a song in my heart and a prayer in my lips. I rejoiced that I was going to be with him that very day.

Con: As we think of these two thieves, let us observe that some will end up like the first thief. They will burn continually. They will be dying perpetually and yet never die. Others like the second thief will go to a place where death's shadow will never fall, where sin's slime, and sorrow's sighs are never known.

Perhaps you want to become a Christian but want to wait till tomorrow. Tomorrow my friend is a rock whitened by the bones of mariners wrecked thereon. It is the idiot's cup from which so many drink. It is the key to a treasure chest that nobody claims. Life is so uncertain. (Prov 27:1, Jas 4:14) Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts as in the day of provocation." (Heb 3:15)

Behold Thy Son

Intro: 1. We come again to Calvary where the rivers of prophecy run into a sea of fulfillment, where the blood for our cleansing was drawn from Immanuel's royal veins, where sinners plunged beneath that flood loose all their guilty stains. Yes, Calvary where Jesus Christ the Son of God spoke seven times from the cross.

2. Our text is John 19:25–27. Let us now take a closer look at these verses.

I Consider First Of All Those Standing By The Cross

A. There was by the cross, Mary the mother of Jesus. She was in the greatest crisis of her life. Yet, she was no stranger to hardship!

1. Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her that she would give birth to the Son of God. This was troubling and perplexing to her. (Lk 1:28–35)
2. When she was found with child, her relationship with Joseph was strained to such an extent that he was minded to put her away privily. (Mt 1:19)
3. On the night of Jesus' birth there was no room in the inn. (Lk 2:7)
4. Then there was Herod's decree to kill all male children two years of age and under, in an effort to kill Christ. (Mt 2:16)
5. In view of this decree Joseph and Mary were told to go down into the land of Egypt. Surely this worked a great hardship on them as Jews in an Arab country.
6. Finally, after their return to Israel, Jesus was taken to the temple. A man by the name of Simeon was there. God had promised that he would not see death until he saw the salvation of Israel. He also told Mary that a sword would pierce her soul. (Lk 2:24–25)
7. Now the sword had pierced her soul. She saw her son despised and rejected by his own people. Now the brow that she had so often kissed was covered with a crown of thorns, blood, and sweat. His tongue that called out to her so many times in the night as a little boy was now parched by the fires of hell. The hands that she held as the Christ child took his first step were nailed to the cross. The feet

that she bathed a thousand times after Jesus had been running up and down the dusty roads of Nazareth were transfixed with the spikes of perdition to the cursed tree.

8. Here we see a mother's love. The disciples had fled. Christ's friends had forsaken him. His nation rejected him. His enemies were crying for his blood. Yet, Mary stands by the cross. She does not run, faint, nor join the others. What love and what courage!
9. Yet, in spite of all this, Mary is not to have an elevated place in the church. She is not to be viewed as the Queen of Heaven or the Mother of God as our Catholic friends teach. Mary did not remain a perpetual virgin as the Catholics teach. Christ had brothers and sisters. (Mk 6:3) Mary is not the mediator between God and man. Christ is! (I Tim 2:5) Mary was just another disciple. Her name is not mentioned in the Bible beyond Acts 1:14.

B. Salome, Mary's sister was there. Her husband was Zebdee and her sons were James and John. At one time she wanted her sons to sit one on the right hand and one on the left hand, when Jesus set up his kingdom. (Mt 20)

C. Mary the wife of Clopas or Alphaeus was also there. Tradition says that Clopas and Joseph were brothers.

D. Mary Magdalene, the woman from whom Jesus cast out seven demons was present. She never forgot what Christ did for her and was no doubt expressing her gratitude. (Mk 16:9)

E. We need to point out that these women along with some others ministered to Jesus while he was in Galilee. (Mt 27:55)

F. Finally, there was the Apostle John. He had forsaken Jesus in the garden but to his everlasting credit, he returned and stood at the cross. No wonder he is known as the disciple Jesus loved.

II Woman Behold Thy Son

A. Why was the word "woman" used instead of "mother?" Some say that Jesus showed a lack of respect by not addressing her as "mother."

B. Paul in Gal 4:4 said, "In the fullness of time, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law."

C. In John 2:4–5 we have Mary telling Jesus about the problem of running out of wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. Jesus said, woman what I have to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, whatsoever he sayeth unto you, do it. Now it could be that Mary was rushing things a bit and that Jesus gave her a mild rebuke. After all, she was a human being subject to error like us all. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23) Mary was no exception to that rule! Jesus had to turn water into wine when it was the Father's will. No one, not even his mother, regardless of her intentions could stand between Christ and the Father.

D. Some think that Christ used the term "woman" to refute Catholic views about Mary that soon were to arise. In Mt 12:48–50 Christ was told that his mother and brothers and sisters were waiting to see him. Jesus declared that all who do the will of the Father are his sisters, brothers, and mothers.

E. My personal convictions are that Chrsit used the word "woman" to show Mary that the relationships of the flesh were temporary and earthly at best. In contrast to that Mary's relationship to Jesus as her Saviour and Lord was permanent and heavenly. My friends, as precious as fleshly relationships are, there are higher and holier relationships. In the resurrection, we shall neither marry nor be given in marriage. (Mt 22:30) Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (I Cor 15:50–51)

F. Now notice the next part of Jesus' utterance. He said, "Behold thy son." He was not talking about himself but John.

1. I think that there is something infinitely moving about this utterance. Jesus in the agony of the cross and while the world hangs in the balance takes time to care for his mother.
2. It is believed that Joseph was dead. He is never mentioned beyond Luke chapter two.
3. Jesus' brothers did not believe in him. (Jno 7:5)
4. So in a sense John was a substitute for Jesus, who was a substitute for John on the cross.

III Behold Thy Mother

A. John was a cousin to Jesus. Christ left Mary in his care. Under the law Jews were to honor their father and mothers. (Ex 20:12) I think Jesus was doing this in providing Mary a home.

B. Paul said that those who do not care for their own are worse than infidels and deny the faith. (I Tim 5:8)

C. Tradition says that Mary lived for twelve years and died in Ephesus.

Con: We certainly learn from this text the importance of family relationships. But we learn that there is an even higher relationship and that is the relationship between man and God. (Mt 10:34–39)

The Forsaken Christ

Intro: Today we come again to Calvary where darkness covered the land from noon till three. Calvary where midnight pushed noon day off the throne of the universe. We come to Golgotha where Jesus who created the first ray of light and sent it speeding through uncharted darkness, like an archangel with his garments on fire. Now Jesus hangs in the darkness, naked, blind, silent, bleeding, and dying.

Look at Golgotha. See the three pallid bodies as they shine out whitely against the black velt sky like huge pearls splotched with blood. Darkness has brought an eerie silence to this infamous hill. The only noise you can hear is the groaning of the victims. Suddenly, like a bolt out of the blue, like a sharp clap of thunder ringing through the sky, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, the Son of God cries out, " ... my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46)

I Was Christ Actually Forsaken?

A. The words Christ uttered are recorded in the twenty-second Messianic Psalm by David. (Psm 22:1)

  1. Some say that Jesus learned these words as a boy and that in his delirious state on the cross. That is not true. Jesus was in complete control of himself until the very end. See Lk 23:46.
  2. Others declare that the shock and pain of the cross forced these words from his lips. Not so! Jesus was in greater pain than the human mind can comprehend, while he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. In Matthew 26:38 Jesus said that his soul was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. He could have died before he got to the cross! Think of what that would mean for us all! In Lk 22:44 Christ was praying in agony. So great was his agony that his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. Doctors tell us that stress can cause the human body to actually sweat blood.
  3. Many state that Jesus just felt like he was forsaken. Good reader, our Lord did not just feel like he was forsaken, he was forsaken! Christ did not cry out, Father it seems as if thou hast forsaken me; he asked, why hast thou forsaken me?

B. We must remember that Christ was the object of the Father's love throughout all eternity. He was the

Father's only begotten son. (Jno 3:16) He shared the glory of heaven with the Father, throughout all eternity. (Jno 17:5) Even while on earth in the robe of human flesh, our Lord enjoyed an intimate relationship with the Father.

C. Someone has suggested that there may be no sadder word than the word forsaken. We think of a wife forsaken by her husband. Children are often left in a lonely house, crying, starving, not understanding the cruelty of their parents. But to be forsaken of God! Oh good reader think of being forsaken by God in your hour of greatest need! Jesus knew what it was like to be forsaken of his own people. He came to his own and his own received him not. (Jno 1:11) His own brothers did not believe that he was the Son of God. (Jno 7:5) The disciples had forsaken him by fleeing from the garden when the Judas mob came to take Christ. (Mt 26:56) Before when Christ was forsaken, he could steal away into a mountain or go into the desert and pray. There in intimate communion with the Father, Christ was able to receive the spiritual healing that he needed. But now there was no one that he could turn to and nowhere that he could go.

II Why Did God Forsake Christ?

A. He forsook Christ because Christ was sin and God is too holy to look on sin. In Habakkuk 1:13 the prophet declared, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil."

B. The holiness of God can be seen as the great men of the Bible compare themselves to God.

1. Abraham declared that he was nothing but ashes and dust. (Gen 18:27)
2. Job 42:6 says, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes."
3. Isaiah wrote, woe is unto me for I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips. (Isa 6:5)
4. Daniel's comeliness turned into corruption. (Dan 10:8)

5. Peter told Jesus, depart from me Lord, for I am a sinful man. (Lk 5:8)

C. We must be impressed with the fact that Jesus was sin while hanging on that cross. Isa 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way, and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Paul wrote eight hundred years later, "Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God through him." (II Cor 5:21)

D. Christ was also forsaken by the Father because it was the just thing to do. The laws of God had been broken by men. Justice cried out for punishment. We would not think much of a judge that would play favorites or take bribes. Nor would one be held in high esteem or kept in office that was caught setting justice aside. My friends, when the world sunk into sin in Noah's days, God overflowed it with the waters of the flood. When Sodom and Gomorraha had wallowed around in the pigpen of immorality long enough, God sent fire and brimstone and utterly destroyed the people. When God had enough of the Egyptians, he sent the final plague, which took the lives of the firstborn of man and beast, where there was not the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintels. Now the thunderbolt of divine wrath has been sent to Christ by the Father, as God satisfies the just portion of his nature. Isaiah 53:11 says that when God shall see the travail of his (Jesus) soul, he (God the Father) shall be satisfied. Christ's death would satisfy God's sense of justice. Perhaps there is no passage any clearer than Romans 3:26. In this verse we are told that Christ's death enabled God to just and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus. Thus, God was able to satisfy that part of his nature that demanded justice and that part of his nature that called for him to provide a way of salvation for man.

III Lessons That We Should Learn

A. This text teaches us that Christ did not loose faith in his heavenly Father. Notice that two times in the text he says, "My God, my God." Let us not mistake Christ's distress for mistrust. The personal pronoun "my" should show us that his faith in the Father was not wavering. Like Job of old Jesus was saying, though he slay me yet will I trust him. (Job 13:15) We too should learn that no matter how dark the night, we must maintain our faith in the God of heaven. We can do that because we know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose. (Rom 8:38) Our God will always be with us. (Heb 13:5–6, Mt 28:20)

B. In this utterance of Christ, our salvation was becoming a reality. Jesus was called the Lamb of God, that cometh to take away the sins of the world by John the Baptist in John 1:29. Christ was in the process of taking away our sins when this cry came forth out of his mouth. When God sent the final plague upon Egypt which was the death of the firstborn male of both man and beast. The only way to escape this was to have the blood of a lamb on the doorposts and lintels. God then said, and when I see the blood I will pass over you. (Ex 12:13) Paul calls Christ our passover that was sacrificed for us. (I Cor 5:7) My friends, when we have the blood of the Lamb applied to our souls, the spiritual death angel will pass over us!

C. Certainly in these famous words spoken on Golgotha, we see the greatest love that heaven and earth has ever known. Christ abhored sin. He loathed it. His holy soul shrank from it and yet all our sins were laid on him. Sin coiled itself around him like a poisonous snake. He endured all of this for us. Why? Because he loved us. Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (Jno 15:13) Good reader, would anyone pick up a poisonous snake for you? Jesus did. Would anyone drink a cup of poison to save you? Jesus did. Would anyone in the prime of his life turn his back upon everything to save you? Jesus did. See Rom 5:6–10. When we get to heaven and see the nail prints in his hands and feet. When we hear him tell the old, old story from his perspective. When we understand what it meant to him and when we fully understand what it means to us, we will fall down on our faces and praise him world without end!

D. Finally, these haunting words of Christ from the cross sound forth a warning to the unsaved. While on earth Christ invited the lost to come unto him. (Mt 11: 28–30) The Spirit and the bride or the church still say come. (Rev 22:17) Men should account the long-suffering of the Lord as salvation. (II Pet 3:15) The Day of God's mercy and the time of his patience will run out. Gen 6:3 tells us that God's Spirit will not always strive with man. Three times in Rom 1:24, 26, 28 God said that he had given up on the Gentiles. The day of judgment is coming. According to Paul it is a day of indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anger. (Rom 2:8–9) If God spared not his own Son. If he allowed him to suffer the way he did on the cross, do we dare think that God will allow the wicked to go unpunished? My friends, surely they will undergo a degree of punishment unknown to mortal man. God also allows his church to suffer. See I Pet 4:17–18. Again, if he allowed his own people to suffer, there will be no hesitation on God's part to punish the doomed and the damned world without end! Truly the wages of sin are death. (Ezk 18:20, Rom 6:23)

Con: The darkest day in the history of the world was the day that the sun went down at noon day over the carnage of Calvary. Yes, a thick cloud of darkness rose out of the dungeon and slimey marshes of a Devil's hell and covered Golgotha on that sweet, clear, April afternoon. That midnight covered Jesus who put the sun in the sky and shrouded him as he hung there bleeding and dying. Look at his pale brow, his livid face, his sinking eyes, and his quivering lips. Look at them! Then say no to Christ's invitation to you to become a Christian. I dare you!

The Thirsting Christ

Intro: 1. We come again to Golgotha where human guilt like a poisonous serpent has coiled its self around the neck of Jesus. Yes, Golgotha the moral axis of the world upon which the wheels of redemption move. At Calvary the fire of our everlasting doom has been extinguished and our eternal death sentence has been revoked. Now for the fifth time Jesus speaks from the cross.

2. Our text is John 19:28–29.

I An Analysis Of The Text

A. Jesus knew that "all things were now accomplished or finsihed." Our Lord said in his intercessory prayer, "I have glorified thee on earth having accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do." (Jno 17:4) Jesus had been about his Father's business and had carried out the Father's will.

B. Jesus also knew that "the scriptures were fulfilled or accomplished." Jesus fulfilled some three hundred and thirty-three prophecies. In fact the written word of God formed the thoughts of Christ and regulated his ways in life and death. See Mt 4:4, 7, 10.

C. What about us? Are the scriptures the final court of appeal with us? The Psalmist declared that God's word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway in Psm 119:105. Can we say that? Are the commands of God's word binding in our lives? Can we say with David, "I made haste and delayed not to observe thy commandments?" (Psm 119:60) Do we conduct ourselves as people who realize that we will be judged by the Bible. (Jno 12:48, Rom 2:6, Jas 2:13)

D. Jesus said, "I thirst." In the beginning of the crucifixion process, vinegar or sour wine mingled with myrrh was offered to him but he refused it. Why? Because it contained an opiate. It was a genuine act of mercy designed to relieve the suffering of the victims of this horrible form of death. I think Jesus wanted to keep his mind clear and wanted to be in control of all the events while on the cross. There were yet scriptures to fulfill and things to be accomplished. Now in our text he is offered wine and does not refuse it. I think it lacked the myrrh in this case. In this case Jesus received it. Tradition says that this vinegar was the sour wine used by the soldiers around the cross and that the soldier who gave it to Christ became a Christian.

II This Cry Offers Evidence Of Christ's Humanity

A. Jesus was God and yet man. He was man and yet God.

1. Jno 1:1–3, 14
2. Heb 2:17 says that Christ was made like unto his brethren.
3. Jesus hungered. (Mt 4:2) He slept. (Mk 4:38) He rejoiced in the spirit. (Lk 10:21) He groaned in the spirit and wept. (Jno 11:33, 35)

B. Now he cries out, I thirst! No doubt the wounds in his body were inflamed and his body racked with fever. Certainly this brought on his intense thirst. Yet, Solomon declared that a broken spirit drieth up the bones. (Prov 17:22) Christ's spirit was broken by being misunderstood, misjudged, misrepresented, and by being forsaken by his nation, friends, family, and even the Father.

    1. Jno 1:11
    2. Jno 7:5
    3. Isa 53:10–11, Isa 53:4
  C. Because of the humanity of Christ we now have:
    1. A high priest who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities (Heb 4:15)
    2. A mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus. (I Tim 2:5)
    3. An intercessor, who ever liveth to make intercession for us (Heb 7:25)
    4. One on whom we can cast our anxieties, one who cares for us (I Pet 5:7)

III This Cry Illustrates The Intensity Of Christ's Physical And Spiritual Suffering

  A. The same Jesus that poured out of the crystal chalice of eternity the rivers of earth and who scooped out the cradles for the lakes, seas, and oceans, now cries out, I thirst!
  B. The same Jesus, who so often satisfied the thirst of others and who left the world a fountain of life, now needs water to relieve his thirst.
  C. Yes, now on the cross his mouth is parched. It burns like a hot oven on fire with the flames of hell. His tongue is now swollen with unspeakable drought. To understand his thirst and its intensity, let us consider the events that preceeded and made up his death.
    1. He prayed in utter agony in the garden. So much so that his sweat became great drops of blood falling to the ground. (Lk 22:42)
    2. He was betrayed by Judas, one of the twelve, who had been his intimate companion. (Mt 26:14–15) When Judas led the mob into the garden, the disciples forsook him. (Mt 26:53)
    3. He went through all kinds of mock trials. He was taken first to Caiaphas, then to Pilate, then to Herod, then to Pilate.
    4. He was then scourged. He was beaten then by a

whip that had pieces of bone or metal intertwined in the leather thongs.

5. He then was forced to carry his cross. The beams of the cross were ten inches square. The cross may have weighed as much as one hundred to two hundred pounds!
6. Christ was then crucified. They drove nails into his hands and feet. Then the cross was dropped into a three foot hole. There was further tearing of the tissue, bursting of the capilaries, and a tremendous strain on the tendons and ligaments. Breathing was very difficult because the nerves around the shoulder blades hampered it. One's whole body had to be pumped up and down with the feet if the rib cage was to go up and down and breathe as it should. Imagine how painful that would be when your feet are nailed to the cross! There was an imbalance between the acids and bases. Acidosis or a decline in the alkaline content took place. Then there was headache, pain, bleeding, exposure, suffocation, convulsions, tetanus, unconsciousness, and fever. Who can fathom this and so much more that our Lord underwent? We may be able to grasp the physical suffering but not the mental, emotional, and spiritual anguish that our Saviour endured for us! He poured out his soul unto death. (Isa 53:12) He emptied himself! (Phil 2:7)

IV Jesus' Cry From The Cross Offers Evidence That Proves The Inspiration Of The Bible

A. Read these prophetic utterances made in the Messianic Psalms.
   1. Psm 22:1, 7–8, 16, 18
   2. Psm 41:9

B. In connection with this the fifth saying of Christ, consider these verses.
   1. Psm 22:14–15
   2. Psm 69:21

V In The Thristing Christ We Should See The One Who Can Satisfy Our Thirst

A. Man is a thirsty creature and he is always seeking to satisfy that thirst. Man thirsts for wealth, honor, high position, pleasure, security. Most people are willing to do anything to get these things. They are willing to compromise and give up their convictions. Many Christians are doing this. They have stifled their conscience so long and have made so many deals, that they have been drained of all spiritual strength!

B. We must all learn that the things of this life cannot satisfy. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever shall drink of the water that I will give unto him shall never thirst, for the water that I will give will be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Then the woman said to Jesus, "Sir give me of this water that I thirst not." (Jno 4:13–15)

Con: 1. Psm 42:1–2
2. Isa 12:3
3. Rev 7:16–17

It Is Finished

Intro: 1. There never was a pulpit like the cross or an audience like those around the cross, nor a preacher like the dying Christ.
2. We come again to Calvary where God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. (Jno 3:16)
3. Yes Calvary, where God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8)
4. We come again to Golgotha where Christ was wounded for our transgressions, where he was bruised for

our iniquities, where the chastisement of our peace was upon him, where by his stripes we are healed, where Jehovah placed on him the iniquities of us all. (Isa 53:5–6)

5. In our text of John 19:30 Jesus cries out, "It is finished."
6. These three words in English are actually one word in the Greek (tetelesai) which is in the perfect tense.
7. This Greek word could be rendered, "It is matured, completed, accomplished, or perfected."
8. What was finished?

I Jesus Finished Fulfilling Prophecies

A. Bethlehem was to be his birth place. (Micah 5:2, Mt 2:6)
B. His birth was a virgin birth. (Isa 7:14, Mt 1:23)
C. He was to be rejected by men. (Isa 53:3, Jno 1:11)
D. He was to be betrayed for forty pieces of silver. (Zech 11:2, Mt 26:14)
E. He was to receive gall and vinegar. (Psm 69:21, Mt 27:34)
F. Men would gamble for his garments. (Psm 22:18, Jno 19:23–24)
G. No bones would be broken. (Psm 34:20, Jno 19:36)
H. His hands and feet would be pierced. (Psm 22:16, Jno 19:34, Rev 1:7)
I. In fact Jesus fulfilled over three hundred prophecies. This is one of the greatest proofs of the divine inspiration of the Bible.

II Jesus Completed The Old Testament Law

A. Jesus fulfilled the law. He brought it to an end.
B. While on the cross the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom. (Mt 27:51) This was God's way of showing that the law was no longer binding on the Jews or anyone else.
C. Jesus took away the Old Testament. (II Cor 3:14)
D. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. (Gal

3:13)

E. If righteousness is through the law then Christ died for nought. (Gal 2:21)

F. The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Gal 3:24, 25)

G. We are made dead to the law through the death of Jesus and our marriage to him. (Rom 7:4)

H. Christ nailed the law to the cross. The law has been changed. (Col 2:14, Heb 7:12)

I. Thank God we do not have to live under the Old Law that was never designed to save even one single soul!

III Jesus' Suffering On The Cross Was Finished

A. No man ever suffered like Jesus. He was indeed the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isa 53:3)

B. He suffered at the hands of men.

1. Lk 2:13
2. Lk 4:29

C. He suffered at the hands of Satan. (Lk 4:13)

D. Jesus suffered at the hands of the Father. (Isa 53:10)

E. The spector of the cross loomed before Jesus at all times.

1. He referred to it at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. (Jno 2:4)
2. It came up in his discussion of the new birth with Nicodemus. (Jno 3:14)
3. He brought it up to James and John when their mother asked for high positions for them in the coming kingdom. (Mt 20:22)
4. Christ spoke of his death after Peter's confession. (Mt 16:21)
5. In fact while on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah spoke of his decease. (Lk 9:31)
6. The truth of the matter is that Christ thought about the cross when he got up in the morning, while he ate, worked, fellowshipped, and no doubt while he slept!

F. Now the cup was drained. God's wrath had passed.

IV Jesus Finished Satisfying Divine Justice

A. Isa 53:11
B. Rom 3:26

V Christ Finsihed Paying The Price For Our Redemption

A. Eph 1:7, I Pet 1:18–19
B. He not only paid the price for our individual redemption. He paid the price for the church or our collective redemption.
    1. Eph 5:25
    2. Acts 20:28

VI Jesus Finished The Father's Business

A. Lk 2:49
B. Jno 4:34
C. Jno 17:4

VII Finally, Let It Be Known That This Cry Was A Cry Of Victory

A. Jesus cried out it is finished with a loud voice. (Jno 19:30, Mt 27:50)
B. Just as David carried five stones with him to win the victory over Goliath, our Lord's five wounds gained for God and man a victory over the following.
    1. Jesus won a great victory over Satan and sin, when he bruised the head of Satan on the cross and through his resurrection. (Gen 3:15) See also I Jno 3:8, Rev 20:10.
    2. Jesus won a victory over the world. (I Jno 5:4)
    3. Jesus won a victory over death. (I Cor 15:57, Heb 2:14)
C. Because of these great victories, we the church should be victorious. The gates of hell or hades cannot prevail against the church. (Mt 16:18) We are a kingdom that cannot be destroyed or shaken. (Dan 2:44, Heb 12:28) Therefore, we should cry out with John the revelator,

hallelujah, the Lord God, the almighty reigneth! (Rev. 19:6)

Con: When the words of our text fell from the lips of Jesus, they rang through the high arches of heaven. The angels no doubt cried out, lift up your heads O ye gates and be lifted up, ye everlasting door, and the king of glory shall come in. When this sixth utterance fell from the lips of Christ, hell trembled. The vaults of the lost world into which mercy shall never enter shook and still shake. In this cry from the mouth of our redeemer the peoples of the earth heard a cry of hope and inspiration which they desperately needed.

Into Thy Hands

Intro: 1. We come again to Calvary where we hear the sweetest story ever told. Calvary where the chasm between God and man has been bridged over. Calvary where Christ gave up all he had on earth that we might have all there is in heaven.

2. Yes, Calvary where the very Son of God speaks for the final time.
3. Lk 23:46

I Jesus Returns To Communion With The Father

A. The first utterance began with the word Father. (Lk 23:34) The last saying also begins with the word Father. (Lk 23:46)

B. Father was an important word with Christ, even at an early age. (Lk 2:49)

1. In Matthew chapters five through seven which make up the Sermon on the Mount the word "Father" appears 17 times.
2. In John chapters fourteen and fifteen the word

"Father" appears 45 times.

3. The word "Father" appears 6 times in John 17: 1–21.

C. We too must desire communion with the Father.
  1. Mt 7:11
  2. Jno 14:1–3, 17:20–21
  3. II Cor 1:3
  4. Eph 1:3, 3:20
  5. Phil 4:19
  6. Jas 1:17
  7. I Jno 3:1
  8. Rev 21:4

II Notice The Great Contrast

A. For fifteen hours Christ was in the hands of men.
  1. Mt 17:22, 26:25
  2. Acts 2:23

B. Jesus voluntarily submitted to the hands of men.
  1. Mt 26:53–54
  2. Jno 18:6

C. But now the tables are turned. Never again will Jesus be in humanity's wicked hands.
  1. Once mortal man had cast Christ out of the land of the living. One day soon he will return as the Lord of the living and the dead. (Rev 1:7)
  2. Once Christ was in man's bloody hands, soon all men will be in the nail scared hands of Christ on the day of judgment. (II Cor 5:11, Rev 22:12)
  3. Once mortal man cried out away with Christ. Soon Christ will cry from the great white throne, cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Yes, the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings will say, depart from me ye that work iniquity, I never knew you. (Mt 25:30, Mt 7:21)

III In This Cry We See The Place Of Eternal Security

A. Jesus committed himself to the Father in life and

death.
    1. I Pet 2:23
    2. Lk 23:46
- B. Note some others who did the same.
    1. Paul (Phil 1:20, 23, II Tim 1:12)
    2. Peter (I Pet 4:19)
    3. Stephen (Acts 7:59–60)
- C. If we will follow these examples the promise of Mt 10:28 will be ours.
- D. This promise is not unconditional.
    1. Jno 17:2
    2. I Jno 2:3, 5:13

IV Jesus Gave Up The Ghost Or Spirit

- A. The text does not say that he died.
- B. He gave up his life voluntarily. (Jno 10:18)
- C. In this Christ showed his Lordship. He was in control of himself and the events of the cross until the very last.

Con:
1. Some have said that the words of our text were a prayer. If so, it is interesting to notice that he prayed for his spirit and not the body. Jesus was also practicing what he preached. (Lk 18:1)
2. This saying is also found in Psalm 31:5, fulfilling a Messianic Psalm.
3. Jesus commended his soul to the Father for safe keeping. He believed and practiced what he taught others. Christ had faith that the body laid in Joseph's tomb would soon be reunited with his soul that had gone down into the hadean world. (Ecc 12:7, Acts 2:27)
4. Jesus left us not only an example of how to live but also an example of how to die. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could say as we lay dying, Father into thy hands, I commend my spirit?
5. We must either commend our souls into the hand of God now or face the prospects of falling into the hands of the true and living God later! (Heb 10:31)

CHARACTER STUDIES

John The Baptist

Intro: 1. The coming of John the Baptist was foretold in Isa 40:3–5.
2. Note also Mal 3:1 and Mal 4:5
3. John stands at the opening of the door of the New Testament.
4. He stands as one who forecloses one era and as one who is a forerunner of a new era. John aids in the transition from law to grace. (Jno 1:17)

I His Birth

A. John's Parents
  1. Zachariah – he was a priest of the course of Abia. (Lk 1:5)
  2. Elizabeth – descendent of Aaron (Lk 1:5) and cousin to Mary. (Lk 1:36)

B. The nature of his parents. (Lk 1:5–7)
  1. They were righteous before God.
  2. They walked according to the commandments and ordinances.
  3. They were blameless.
  4. They were well stricken in years.

C. The providential circumstances of John's birth. (Lk 1:11, 14, 20)
  1. Gabriel appeared to Zacharias.
  2. Thy prayers have been heard.
  3. Elizabeth shall bear a son called John.
  4. His birth shall bring joy and gladness.
  5. Zacharias was made dumb because he believed not.

D. He was born around 5 B.C.

II John The Man

A. Great in the sight of the Lord. (Lk 1:15–16)

- B. He shall drink no wine nor strong drink. Was he a Nazarite?
- C. He was filled from the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. Yet did no miracles, We too must be filled with the Spirit. (Eph 5:18) We do not have the miraculous measure of the Spirit.
- D. He was a prophet of the Most High. (Lk 1:76)
- E. He grew and waxed strong in the spirit. He was a spiritual giant.
- F. He was in the deserts until the day of his showing to Israel. (Lk 1:80)
- G. It is believed that John began his ministry around 28–29 A.D. This would have been in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar. He was then about thirty-two years old, when he began to prepare the way of the Lord.
- H. According to Mt 3:4 John's raiment was of camel's hair. He had a leather girdle. His food was locusts and wild honey.
- I. He was a righteous and holy man. (Mk 6:20)
- J. He was a humble man
  - 1. Mk 1:7
  - 2. Mt 3:14
  - 3. Jno 3:30
- K. John was Jesus' cousin.

III John's Mission

- A. He shall turn the children of Israel to God.
- B. In the spirit and power of Elijah he shall cause the disobedient to walk in the way of the just. (Mal 4:5)
- C. He shall make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Lk 1:17)
- D. He shall prepare the way of the Lord.
- E. He was to provide knowledge of salvation, so the people could have remission of sins. (Lk 1:76–77)
- F. He came to bear witness to Jesus the light, so desperately needed by those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. (Lk 1:79, Jno 1:6–7)

G. He did not establish the Baptist Church. He was slain in Mt 14:10. Jesus promised to build his church in Mt 16:18. The word "Baptist" is found fifteen times in the New Testament. It refers to a man sent from God named John. (Jno 1:6) It was never used of his followers. They were called his disciples. (Jno 1:35) The word "Baptist" referred to John's acts of baptism. (Jno 3:23) Literally, John the Baptist is John the immerser. He was John "the" Baptist, not John "a" Baptist.

IV The Preaching Of John

A. He stressed repentance. This is something we do not stress enough!
   1. Baptism of repentance. (Lk 3:3)
   2. He required fruits of repentance. (Lk 3:8–14)
   3. The New Testament emphasizes the necessity of repentance. (Lk 13:3, Acts 3:19, Acts 30:31)

B. John preached on the coming kingdom. (Mt 3:2)
   1. John was never in the kingdom. He was slain. (Mk 6:14)
   2. Jesus in Mk 9:1 said the kingdom was yet to come.

C. John lost his life for his courageous preaching against sin. (Mt 14:1–11) Sin would be dealt with at judgment. (Mt 3:10–12)

D. John preached Christ in Mt 3:11–12, Lk 3:4, John 1:6–31.
   1. He preached of one who was mightier than himself.
   2. He preached of one who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.
   3. He announced the coming of Jesus.
   4. John said Jesus was before him. (Jno 1:1–3, 14, 8:56, 17:4–5)
   5. John said Jesus gave us fullness of grace and truth. (Jno 1:16–17)
   6. John denied that he was the Christ.
   7. John called Jesus the Lamb of God that cometh to take away the sins of the world.

        - 8. He declared him to be the Son of God.
- E. John's preaching was very unique.
    - 1. His audience came from all Judea.
    - 2. His pulpit was the bank of the Jordan.
    - 3. He baptized many in the Jordan. This was the river Naaman dipped in to be cleansed of his leprosy. The Israelites crossed this river miraculously. (Josh 3:17) This river was divided by Elijah and Elisha. (II Kings 2:8, 14)
    - 4. Soon it was to be used for the baptism of Jesus.

V The Baptism Of Jesus

- A. Jesus came voluntarily. (Mt 3:13)
- B. Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan. That's about eighty miles! (Mt 3:13)
- C. Jesus came to be baptized of John. (Mt 3:13–14)
- D. Why?
    - 1. He had no sins. (Jno 8:46, I Pet 2:22, I Jno 3:5, II Cor 5:21) We must be baptized for the remission of our sins. (Acts 2:38)
    - 2. To fulfill all righteousness! (Mt 3:15, Psm 119:172, Mt 21:25, Lk 7:30, Heb 10:7) It is right to be baptized.
    - 3. Manifest himself to Israel. (Jno 1:31)
    - 4. To be acknowledged as God's son. (Mt 3:17, Jno 1:33–34) We too need to be baptized, so we can be sons of God. (Gal 3:26–27)
    - 5. To set an example. (I Pet 2:21, I Thess 1:6, I Cor 11:1) Our baptism sets forth a likeness of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. (Rom 6:36)
    - 6. To receive the Holy Spirit. (Mt 3:16, Isa 11:1–2, 61:1, Jno 3:34) We receive the Spirit in baptism. (Acts 2:38)

VI John's Baptism

- A. It was immersion.
    - 1. Mt 3:16
    - 2. Mk 1:10

   3. Acts 8:36–39, Rom 6:3–6

B. He required belief in Jesus who was to come. (Acts 19:4)

C. He required repentance. (Lk 3:8)

D. He required confession of sins. (Mt 3:6)

E. He required baptism for the remission of sins. (Mk 1:4)

F. Some of John's disciples were rebaptized in Acts 19:1–5. This was twenty years after Pentecost!

G. Why? Simply because John's baptism had been replaced with New Testament baptism. Perhaps these disciples had been taught and baptized by Apollos, who knew only John's baptism. (Acts 18:24–25)

H. How does New Testament baptism differ from John's Baptism?

   1. John baptized into no name. (Mt 28:19, Acts 2:38, 10:48, 22:16)
   2. John's baptism offered no promise of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)
   3. Jesus' baptism points back to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Rom 6:3–6) John's baptism pointed men to the Christ who had yet to die and be raised from the dead.
   4. John's baptism prepared people to enter the kingdom which was still to come. (Mt 3:2) New Testament baptism puts one into the kingdom that has already come. (Jno 3:3–5)
   5. John's baptism required a confession of sin. (Mt 3:6) New Testament baptism requires a confession of our belief in the diety of Christ. (Acts 8:37, Rom 10:9–10)

I. Were any people rebaptized on Pentecost, who had received John's baptism? There is no indication of such. In Acts 2:41 three thousand souls were added "unto them". "Unto them" is in italics, which means that it is not in the original Greek language. Yet, they were added. To what? To whom? They were added to the Apostles and disciples, who were baptized by John. (Jno 1:37) All who received John's baptism after

Pentecost in my judgment were rebaptized.

Con: Let us remember Mt 11:11, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." John was great because he had great parents. He had a great character and a great mission. John was a great preacher. His greatest work was to baptize Jesus. The greatest compliment ever paid him by man, came from Herod the Tetrarch. When he heard of Jesus, he thought that Christ was John the Baptist risen from the dead. (Mt 14:1–21) John must have been very Christ-like.

Moses

Intro:
1. Moses was one of the greatest characters in the Old Testament. (Deut 34:10)
2. He is a collosus among the figures of humanity.
3. His name appears in the Bible over seven hundred and fifty times in over thirty Bible books.
4. Moses was an author (he wrote the Penteteuch), a lawgiver, the builder of the tabernacle, a prophet, intercessor, and type of Christ.
5. Moses was the "friend of God." (Ex 33:11) He was elected to faith's hall of fame. (Heb 11:23–29)

I Moses' First Forty Years

A. Moses was born in a time of great distress. It was during a time that the Pharoah arose who knew not Joseph. (Ex 1:8)

B. Israel had been in Egypt four hundred years. Their number had grown from seventy to perhaps as many as two million. They were exceedingly mighty in the land. (Ex 1:7)

C. The Egyptians feared that if they went to war, Israel would take sides with their enemies. (Ex 1:10)

D. So the Pharoah sent taskmasters to increase Israel's burdens. Yet, the more burdens Israel received, the more Israel multiplied! (Ex 1:11)

E. The Pharoah then ordered the midwifes to kill all male Hebrew children. They would not do so for their fear of God. (Ex 1:15–21)

F. Then the Pharoah ordered that all male Hebrew babies be cast into the river (Ex 1:22)

G. Moses' Parents

  1. They were Amram and Jochebed. They were both of the tribe of Levi. (Ex 2:1)
  2. When Moses was born he was a goodly child. Acts 7:20 says, he was exceedingly fair and Heb 11:23 says that he was a proper child.
  3. One of the greatest verses in the Bible is Heb 11:23, "By faith Moses when he was born was hid three months of his parents, because they saw that he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment." What great faith and courage manifested by Moses' parents! No wonder he turned out like he did.
  4. But the time came when Moses could be hid no more. So an ark of bulrushes was made. Perhaps the parents of Moses believed that their boy would be safe in the river. They would never look there for him. They placed that waterproof ark in the Nile river. Somehow they believed that the Pharoah's daughter might find him and because of his beauty, spare him. This happened in the providence of God. Miriam his sister was allowed to chose a Hebrew nurse and selected Moses' own mother to care for him. (Ex 2:7–10) The Pharoah's daughter named him Moses which means "to draw out of the water." Thus, Moses' own mother was allowed to mold him during those all important formative years. Amram and Jocebed show us that culture does not need to destroy the souls of the young. Though raised in a

pagan world, Moses as we shall see, held tenaciously to his belief in the one true and living God. (Deut 6:4–9)

II **Moses' Second Forty Years** (Acts 7:20–22)

A. As the years passed Moses grew up.

B. Acts 7:22 says, "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."

1. We have already commented on the appearance of Moses. No doubt he grew up to be a very handsome man. He must have been blessed with many physical assets. These are helpful but not always essential for success. God does not look on the outer man but on the heart. (I Sam 16:7)
2. Moses was a giant intellect. After all he was the Pharoah's daughter's son. He was reared in the King's palace. He had the best education in the world. He was taught such things as astrology, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and the sacred sciences. No doubt, he was also skilled in oratory.
3. Moses was also a leader. Josephus said that when Egypt was attacked by Ethiopia, Moses was made a general and led Egypt to victory.

C. The time came when Moses learned that there was more to life than what he had.

1. Perhaps Moses is a good example of Solomon's statement that, if you train up a child in the way that he shall go, he will not depart from it. (Prov 22:6) Here also is a good illustration of the fact that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses. (Lk 12:15)
2. No verses in all the Bible depict more graphically the change that came over Moses than Hebrews 11:24–26. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of the Pharoah's daughter; choosing rather to suffer ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures

of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater than the riches of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of reward."

3. Surely this was an agonizing decision for Moses. He certainly loved the Pharoah's daughter. She had done much for him. Any way you look at it, his decision was a great personal sacrifice. He had prominence, honor, fame, and fortune. Yet, he gave it all up for a life of suffering, ill treatment, and reproach.

D. How could Moses make such a decision?

1. Moses knew that the pleasures of sin last only for a season. In fact I suspect that Moses realized that the world was passing away and life at its longest is brief indeed. (Psm 90:10, Jas 4:14, II Pet 3:10)
2. Moses also knew that his honor, glory, fame, power, and riches would fade away into insignificance in death and in eternity. Death is the great equalizer. (Isaiah chapter fourteen)
3. Moses believed that suffering ill treatment or reproach like that which Jesus was to bear would enable him to lay up treasures in heaven. (Mt 6: 19:21)
4. Moses kept his eternal reward ever before him. He looked beyond this life to the next. He considered eternal life more important than his earthly life. God is a rewarding God. (Heb 11:6) Our eternal reward ought to motivate us to seek the things that are above and not the things that are on the earth. (Col 3:1–2)
5. Finally Moses kept his eye on the invisible God. This enabled him to endure. Christians are told to run with patience the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus, who is the author and the perfecter of our faith. (Heb 12:1–2) If we will keep our eye on God through faith, we will be able to overcome any obstacles along life's uneven pathway.
6. The time came in Moses life when he had to choose

between the physical and the spiritual. We too must make a choice. Jesus said in Mt 6:24, "No man can serve two masters, he will either hate the one and love the other; or he will hold to one and despise the other, ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Mt 6:33, 16:24)

E. Moses had times in his life when he did everything right. He also had times in his life when he made great mistakes. Did you ever make such a mistake that the whole world seemed as if it were against you? Moses did. Yet, good reader, God used Moses inspite of his mistakes. God did not turn against him.

1. In Ex 2:11–12 Moses saw a Hebrew being beaten by his Egyptian taskmaster. Moses killed the Egyptian. He was probably motivated by both anger and compassion.
2. Imagine Moses' shock when his brethren turned against him for doing what he thought was an act that would bring about their deliverance! (Acts 7:25) They did not understand and wanted to know who made Moses a judge over them. Not only was Moses rejected by his own people. He was also rejected by the Egyptians. In fact the Pharoah sought to kill him. (Ex 2:15)
3. Moses was probably motivated more by emotion than by rationality. His heart was ahead of his head. He was acting as one who relied on his own strength. He was later to learn that victory would be won with might far beyond any that he had ever known. At age forty he killed an Egyptian. At eighty he killed thousands with the help of almighty God.
4. As a result of this rejection, Moses fled to the land of Midian. There he married Jehtro's daughter Zipporah. They had two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. He remained in the land of Midian for forty years.
5. These were not wasted years. He was becoming seasoned for the leadership role that would one day be his. He was subjected to the severe discipline of

the desert, learning first hand the land that he was to be so much a part of in the future.

III The Third Forty Years

A. Ex 3:1–10, Acts 7:30–36

B. From these verses we learn that the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. God spoke to him out of the bush. He told Moses that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God declared that his people were afflicted and that he would deliver them. Moses was told that he was to stand before the Pharoah for the purpose of delivering Israel out of Egypt.

C. Then Moses began to offer excuses!

1. Who am I? God said, I AM with thee. (Ex 3:11–12)
2. What shall I say? God said, you tell them I AM that I AM hath sent you. (Ex 3:13–14)
3. What if they will not believe or listen? God said that he would give them three signs. They were the rod that would turn into a serpent. Then there was the leporous hand and the water that would be turned into blood. (Ex 4:1–9)
4. I am not eloquent. God said that he would teach Moses what to say. Aaron was of course eventually made Moses' spokesmen. (Ex 4:10–14)

D Let us look at each of these excuses.

1. Who am I? During Moses' first forty years, he was filled with self confidence. He tried to deliver Egypt by himself! Now he has an inferiority complex.
2. What shall I say? We might combine this excuse with his fourth excuse which was that he was not eloquent. Stephen said in Acts 7:22 that he was mighty in words. Moses was an educated man. He had the best education that the world could offer down in Egypt.
3. What if they will not believe or listen? Moses had been rejected forty years before this. God understood how Moses felt and gave him some signs.

4. Let us not overlook the fact that Moses made God angry with his excuses. God will not nor never has accepted any excuse that man offers for a failure to do God's will. (Ex 4:13–14)

E. God begins to put Moses to the test for the purpose of helping him to overcome his feelings of inferiority.

1. Ex 4:27–31, 6:1–12
2. The primary methods were the ten plagues that God sent upon Egypt. Though God wanted to show Egypt, Israel, and the world that he was the true and living God, he also wanted to use these miracles to help Moses become the leader God needed to carry out his will. The results were astounding. Though Aaron seemed to have been the leader and spokesman through the first three plagues, Moses begins to assert his leadership with the fourth plague. In Ex 11:3 we are told that Moses was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt and in the sight of Pharoah's servants and in the sight of the people. Thus, when the Egyptian army pursued Israel, Moses said, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. He lifted up his hand and stretched out his rod and the Israelites crossed the Red Sea on dry land. The army of the Pharoah was drowned in the sea as the walls of water collapsed. (Ex 14)

F. Next Israel enters the wilderness and comes to Kadesh-Barnea. God told Israel to send spies into the land of Canaan. (Num 13:2) Twelve were sent. When they came back ten said that the land could not be taken. There are giants in the land and we are as grasshoppers in their sight. God then told Israel that it would wander in the wilderness for forty years because of its unbelief. They were given a year for each day spent in spying out the land. (Num 14:33–34) All twenty years of age and over would perish in the wilderness. (Num 32:11–12) Only Joshua and Caleb would be able to enter into the promised land. (Num 14:22–30)

G The forty year period of wandering was filled with death and disobedience. Stephen said that Israel lapsed into idolatry. (Acts 7:42–43) Even though Israel was unfaithful to God, God was faithful to Israel. Deut 2:7–29 tells us that Israel's clothing and sandals did not wear out!

IV Moses' Sin

A. Israel had come full circle and was back in Kadesh-Barnea. Israel was without water. (Num 20:1–2)

B. Many were too young to remember what God had done in Rephidim. (Ex 17:1–6)

C. So they followed their parents in murmuring. (Num 20:3–5)

D. Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle to pray. God told Moses to take his rod, gather the assembly and speak to the rock. Moses in a fit of anger said, hear now ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? Then Moses smote the rock twice with his rod. (Num 20:1–11)

E. Then God told Moses and Aaron that because God was not sanctified before the people, they would not be allowed to enter Canaan! God could not overlook what Moses had done. If so, others no doubt would be rebelling against God. (Num 20:12, 27:12–14)

F. Moses' response to God's decision is found in Deut 34:25. Moses said that God had shown him how great God was. He said that God had a strong hand and that no god could do what he has done. Then Moses begged God to let him cross over and see the land. God said no!

V Moses' Death

A. Deut 34:1–4

B. God partially answered Moses' prayer by allowing Moses to see the land from Pisghah and Nebo.

C. Moses died. His eye was not dim nor his strength abated, even though he was one hundred and twenty years of age.

D. Moses was buried by God. No one ever knew where God buried Moses.
E. Israel wept and mourned over Moses for thirty days. (Deut 34:8)
F. There arose not again a prophet like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. (Deut 34:10)

VI Moses Was A Type Of Christ

A. Both were imperiled in infancy. (Ex 2:2–10. Mt 2:14–15)
B. Both were tempted. (Ex 7:11, Mt 4:1–12)
C. Both fasted forty days. (Ex 34:28, Mt 4:2)
D. Both controlled the sea. (Ex 14:21, Mt 8:26)
E. Both fed the multitudes. (Ex 16:26, Mt 14:20–21)
F. Both had radiant faces. (Ex 34:35, Mt 17:1–5)
G. Both were intercessors. (Ex 32:32, Jno 17:1–21, Heb 7:25)
H. Both were mediators. (Deut 5:5, I Tim 2:5)
I. Both were lawgivers. (Jno 1:17, Gal 6:2)
J. Both were prophets. (Deut 18:15–18, Acts 3:22–23)
K. Both were meek. (Num 12:3, Mt 11:28–30)
L. Both reappeared after death. (Mt 17:1–5, Acts 1:3)

Con: 1. We have learned the importance of parental influence.
2. The time comes to choose the spiritual over the physical.
3. God will not tolerate excuses.
4. One never gets too old to serve God. We don't retire at 65!
5. From Moses we learn that we never get too old to fail.
6. From Moses we learn how serious sin is.
7. Moses led Israel out of Egyptian bondage. Israel was not free until she crossed through the Red Sea (baptism of Moses I Cor 10:1–4). Then in freedom, Israel wandered in the wilderness, as she journeyed to the promised land. Jesus was sent to deliver us

from the slavery of sin. We are not free until we come up out of the waters of baptism. (Rom 6:3–6, Acts 2:38, 22:16) We are in our own wilderness in the world. Christians are a people heading towards our Canaan, which is heaven above. Israel fell in the wilderness because of unbelief and missed the promised land. Christians can fall from grace in this life and loose our chance for heaven. See Hebrews four.

David

A Man After God's Own Heart

Intro: 1. It has been said that David is mentioned more than any other character in the Bible. He is mentioned three times more than Abraham and many more times than Moses.

2. The name "David" means, "beloved"
3. He was born in Bethlehem. He was the youngest of eight sons. He was of the tribe of Judah, that provided Kings for God's people. His father was Jesse. We do not know who his mother was. Perhaps David gives her a passing notice by saying that she was a handmaid of the Lord. (Psm 86:16) Some think she may have been a Gentile.
4. David was a mountain peak among Bible characters.
5. His genealogy is found in Ruth 4:18–22.
6. He was a multi-talented individual. He was a writer (at least seventy-three of the Psalms), a musician, poet, military leader, hero, and king.

I The Story Of David Begins With The Story Of Saul

A. I Sam 9:1–2 tells us that Saul was a member of the tribe of Benjamin, a man of valor, goodly, and a man that stood head and shoulders above all Israel.

B. In the beginning Saul was very humble. He said that he came from the smallest tribe and the smallest family. When he was to be introduced to Israel as their king, he was found hiding among the baggage. (I Sam 9:21, 10:22--23)

C. Saul changed after becoming King.

  1. Saul took it on himself to do that which only a priest could do He offered a sacrifice. (I Sam 13:12) Samuel told him later that to obey was better than to sacrifice. (I Sam 15:22)
  2. Saul disobeyed God by failing to slay all the Amalekites. (I Sam 15:14–19)
  3. Saul rationalized and offered excuses. (I Sam 15: 20:21)
  4. Saul was told that God rejected him and would take away his kingdom. I Sam 16:14 says, that the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul. How sad!

D. The story of Saul was a story of spiritual and psychological deterioration. His life was filled with fear, jealousy, and anger. His bizzare life ended in suicide.

II David's First Appearance

A. In I Samuel sixteen God told Samuel to fill his horn with oil and go to Jesse the Bethlehemite. From among his sons, Samuel was to annoint a man to take Saul's place.

B. This was in harmony with what Samuel told Saul in I Sam 13:14. In this verse we are told that God wanted a man after his own heart! I Sam 16:7 says that though men look on the outward appearance, Jehovah looketh upon the heart.

C. Samuel annointed David that day as the future king. Saul reigned for thirty-two more years though. It is interesting to note that the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David after his annointing. Saul lost the Spirit of God after this. (I Sam 16:13–14)

III A Look At The Heart Of David

A. David was ruddy. His countenance was beautiful to look upon. He was fair of eyes. (I Sam 16:12) Yet, it was David's heart that was truly beautiful.

B. David's heart believed that God was an all powerful creator.
   1. Psm 19:1
   2. Psm 8:1–9

C. David's heart believed that God knew all. (Psm 139: 1–3)

D. The heart of David believed that God was present everywhere. (Psm 139:7–10)

E. From Psm 36:5–6 David states his belief in the loving kindness, faithfulness and righteousness of God. He also believed as stated in verse seven that God would preserve man. Man could take shelter in the shadow of God's wings. David's God was a God who was very much concerned with man.

F. God saw the following in David's heart.
   1. David had a believing heart. He said a fool declares in his heart that there is no God. (Psm 14:1, 53:1)
   2. David's heart was a thankful heart. David thanked God with his whole heart. (Psm 9:1–2)
   3. God knew that David's heart was truthful. (Psm 15:1–3)
   4. The heart of David was an open heart. David said, "search me O God, know my heart, try me and know my thoughts. " (Psm 139:23–24)
   5. God saw that David desired an acceptable heart. In Psm 19:14 he wrote, "let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O God, my rock and my redeemer."
   6. Humility characterized David's heart. (Psm 131:1) There was simply no haughtiness in his heart.
   7. The fifty-first Psalm shows that David possessed a penitent heart. He acknowledged the need of a clean heart. He knew that God would accept a contrite heart and a broken spirit. (Psm 51:10, 17)

Con: From David we learn the importance of the human heart. Jesus in Mk 7:21–23 taught, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, blasphemy, an evil eye, pride, foolishness: all these things come from within and defile the man."

No wonder Solomon said, guard thy heart with all diligence, for out of it proceed all the issues of life. (Prov 4:23) He also said, as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. (Prov 23:7)

Peter told Simon, thy heart is not right before God. (Acts 8:21) What about yours? Has it been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb? No man will see God without purity of heart. (Mt 5:8)

David's Goliaths

Intro: 1. The story of David and Goliath is one of the most dramatic stories of the Bible.

2. Before this, David was a little known character in the Bible. He served as Saul's musician and armour-bearer.

I The Story Of David And Goliath

A. I Sam 17:1–58 is the lesson text.

B. The Philistines and Israelites were set to do battle. The Philistines were on one mountain and the Israelites were on another.

C. The Philistine's champion was Goliath of Gath. He stood some nine feet, six inches tall. Saul was one who stood head and shoulders above all Israel. Yet, he was small compared to Goliath!

D. Goliath had a helmet of brass. His coat of armour weighed 5,000 shekels of brass. He had greaves upon his legs. His javelin was made of brass. The staff of his spear was as a weaver's beam. The head of his spear was the weight of 600 shekels of iron.

E. Goliath would cry out to the army of Israel and say, "Choose you a man. If he kills you, we will serve you. If I kill him, you will serve us." Israel shook with fear.

F. Then one day David came to bring food to his three brothers that were in the army of Saul. David heard Goliath's challenge. David was told that the man who killed Goliath would become rich. He would marry the king's daughter and his father's house would be set free.

G. David considered Goliath's remarks nothing more than blasphemy. David asked, who is this uncircumcised Philistine? How dare he defy the army of the living God!

H. David told Saul that he would go out and fight Goliath. Saul said David was not able because he was a mere youth. David told Saul that he was a shepherd and had killed wild animals. In verse thirty-seven David said, "As God delivered me out of the paws of the lion and out of the paws of the bear he will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine . . . "

I. Saul began to put his armour on David. David said he did not want it. David took his staff, five smooth stones from a brook, his shepherd's bag and his sling.

J. When Goliath saw him, he looked upon David with disdain. No doubt he was shocked that Israel would send a mere youth with no battle weapons or armour. Goliath cursed David in the name of his gods. He told him that the beasts of the field and the birds of the air would eat his flesh.

K. David replied by saying that Goliath had come to do battle with a sword, spear, and javelin. I come said David, in the name of Jehovah of Hosts. God will deliver thee into my hands. I will smite thee and cut off thy head with thy sword. I am going to do this, so that all will know that there is a God in heaven and that all will know that God does not save with the sword. The battle is the Lord's said David.

L. David then put a stone into his sling and slung it into the forehead of Goliath and the giant fell. He then took Goliath's sword and cut his head off. All of the Philistines fled. Israel then pursued them.

M. One interesting observation that should be made at this point is the possibility that Goliath had four sons and they also were giants. (II Sam 21:19–22) If this is so, David by putting five stones into his shepherd's bag may have anticipated doing battle with these sons also. He was truly a man of great faith and courage!

II A Look At Goliath

A. Goliath was a man who had faith in himself and his weapons. (I Sam 17:5--7)

B. He was proud and arrogant. (I Sam 17:10)

C. He was a worshipper of false gods. Probably he worshipped Baal and Dagon. (I Sam 17:43)

D. He was a typical man of the world, who knew not God. He relied totally on himself and military might. David later fell into the trap of numbering Israel and was punished severely by God. (II Sam 24:1–17)

III David Was Quite A Contrast To Goliath

A. David was not only concerned that Goliath was attacking Israel. He was really disturbed over Goliath's attack on the true and living God!

B. He was a man of great faith. He believed that just as God had delivered him out of the hands of wild beasts in the wilderness, God would deliver him out of the monsterous hands of Goliath. (I Sam 17:37)

C. David came in the name of Jehovah of Hosts. He wanted the pagan Philistines to know the true God. (I Sam 17:45–47)

D. What about us? When men attack the gospel or the church, do they not really attack our blessed God, who stands behind them? Yes. Will we be content to just stand idly by? Paul said, he was set for the defense of the gospel. (Phil 1:16) Are we Jude told us to contend earnestly for the faith. (Jude 3) Are We? When we come to the end of the way will we be able to say with Paul, I have fought a good fight? (II Tim 4: 7–8)

IV David's Second Goliath

A. Little did David know that when he slew Goliath, he would create a new giant that would be harder to handle.

B. King Saul is that giant. When David killed Goliath the giant was the enemy and Saul was his friend.

C. David became very popular in Israel. The people cried out, "Saul has killed his thousands, and David has killed his ten thousands." (I Sam 18:7)

D. Saul became jealous. In verse eight of the eighteenth chapter of I Samuel, Saul is angry and displeased with David. Verse nine says that Saul eyed David from that day forward.

E. Saul was actually afraid of David. (I Sam 18:12)

F. On two occasions Saul hurled a spear at David. He failed to kill him. (I Sam 18:11)

G. Saul removed David from his presence by making him captain of a thousand men. Perhaps he hoped that David would be killed in battle by the Philistines. (I Sam 18:13)

H. Saul even promised David his daughter, if David would fight valiantly. (I Sam 18:17–18)

I. Saul's plan backfired. (I Sam 18:22–29)

J. From Saul and David we learn a very important lesson about jealousy. We learn that the fruits of jealousy are anger, suspicion, and fear. Jealousy can lead to murder.

K. David utterly failed to win the battle with this Goliath. Where was his great faith and courage? Why didn't David ask God for wisdom through the avenue of prayer? Sometimes some of life's greatest failures come after some of life's greatest victories!

Con: David certainly had his Goliaths to fight in life. So do all men. We must fight the Goliaths of Satan, sin, and self. We can defeat them if we will face them with great faith and courage as David did with his first Goliath.

David's Greatest Sin

Intro: I. II Sam 11:1–12:23
  2. David had been living a successful life for twenty years while on the throne of Israel.
  3. Then one day he committed the greatest sin of his life. Let us now take a closer look at this story.

I David And Bathsheba

A. David had been a great warrior for the nation of Israel. Now at age fifty, perhaps David felt like it was time for a rest. He turned the leadership of his army over to Joab.

B. David rose from his bed one evening and walked upon his roof. He saw Bathsheba bathing. The Bible says that she was very beautiful to look on. (II Sam 11:1)
  1. Some say that Bathsheba was trying to seduce David. If so, this would make this incident even worse than it already is.
  2. David sent for Bathsheba and committed adultery with her.
  3. In his mind it was over. Not so! She conceived and sent word to David about her conception.
  4. This incident was not over because David had sinned against God. He broke two of the ten commandments! He had coveted and committed adultery. (Ex 20:14, 17) To make matters worse, David would not admit his sin. He tried to get out of it himself and only made matters much worse.

II David And Uriah

A. David in an attempt to escape his evil deeds sent for Uriah. He tried to make Uriah think that he was interested in Joab's welfare and the state of the fighting. He really wanted Uriah to spend some time with his wife, so that he would know that the child belonged to David. (II Sam 11:7)

B. But Uriah would not do anything but remain at the very door of David. (II Sam 11:9)

C. Then David got Uriah drunk, hoping that he would go home. This did not work.

D. Finally, David sent Uriah into the hottest part of the battle. This time David's scheme worked. Uriah was killed. (II Sam 11:27)

III David And God

A. David thought all his problems were solved with Uriah out of the way.

B. Not so! II Sam 11:27 says that God was displeased with what David had done.

C. David had committed adultery. He lied, stole, and for all practical purposes was guilty of murder! Thus, he had broken four of the ten commandments! (Ex 20: 13–15, 17) David's problems with God were far from over.

IV David And Nathan (II Sam 12:1–7)

A. David had remained in sin for a year. He tried to cover it up and would not acknowledge it.

B. Nathan the prophet appeared on the scene. He told David a story. Once there were two men, a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had great flocks and herds. The poor man had one little ewe lamb. The poor man bought that lamb. He nourished it. It was a pet for his kids and was like oneof the family. One day the rich man had some company. Rather than taking from his flocks and herds to feed his guest, he took the poor man's lamb. When David heard it, he was very angry. He said the rich man was worthy of death and that he should pay the poor man back some fourfold, because he had no compassion.

C. Little did David know that he was condemning himself. In verse seven Nathan said, thou art the man! David then went from anger to grief. Then he was overcome with remorse and became meek.

V **The Results Of David's Sins** (II Sam 12:8–23)

A. David should have been put to death. This was the penalty for adultery and murder under the law. (Lev 20:10, 24:17)

B. By God's grace David's life was spared. (II Sam 12:13)

C. This did not stop the consequences of his sins though.

1. The child born to David and Bathsheba died. It caused David great grief. Out of this experience, David said that the child could not return to him, but he could return to the child! (II Sam 12:15–23)
2. David's son Amnon raped his sister Tamar.
3. Then Absalom David's other son killed his own brother Amnon.
4. Next Absalom rebelled against David and even tried to kill his father.
5. Absalom was killed and again David was filled with great sorrow. (II Sam 18:15)
6. God told David that the sword would not depart from his house. (II Sam 12:10)
7. Solomon, David's son was later to enter into disobedience. Solomon wrote, the way of the transgressor is hard. He knew that from personal experience. He had also seen the devastating effects of sin in his father's life. Truly, they that sow iniquity shall reap calamity. (Prov 13:15, 22:8)

Con: From David we learn that even the greatest servants of God can fall from the grace of God. We also learn that though sins can be forgiven, we cannot escape the consequences of our sins.

Lessons From David's Life

Intro: 1. Why study the life of David?
2. Rom 15:4
3. I Cor 10:11
4. Let us now go back and try to get an overview of David's life.

I Let Us Not Forget That God Annointed David King On The Basis Of His Heart

A. I Sam 13:14 tells us that God was looking for a man after his own heart to take Saul's place on the throne of Israel.

B. David was not always a man after God's own heart. In fact at times, David utterly failed God. I think God knew David would fail at times. He chose David on the basis of his overall life.

C. From David we learn that God is concerned with the heart of man.

1. Solomon said that we are to guard our hearts with all diligence for out of them proceed all the issues of life. (Prov 4:23)
2. Jesus shed more light on Solomon's observations in Mk 7:20–22. He said, " . . . that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride and foolishness."
3. Now we have a better understanding of Prov 23:7 which states, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

D. From David we learn that though our heart is good now, it may not necessarily be so in the future. If we like David ignore the laws of God, we will pay. (Prov 22:8, 13:15)

II David Failed When He Failed To Consult With God

A. David obviously spent much time in communion with God. This is why he was a man after God's own heart. There is even evidence to show that God spoke to David directly.

B. Yet, there were times when David made important decisions in his life without consulting God. He ignored the truth that God had revealed.

C. To David's credit, he always seemed to come back to his spiritual senses. He sought God through prayer. God heard and answered. God helped David.

   1. I Sam 23:4 is a good example of this.
   2. In I Sam 30:6 we are told, David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

D. We too need to consult God before we engage in the decisions of life. We need to consult God through prayer and the scriptures. These are the means, whereby we talk to God and God talks to us. (Lk 18:1, II Tim 2:15)

III David's Greatest Failures Followed His Greatest Successes

A. Following the slaying of Goliath, David became very popular. (I Sam 18:7, 14)

B. Saul became jealous and sought David's life. David's efforts to flee Saul were an utter disaster.

C. David was successful when he did not use the two opportunities to kill Saul. But when he fled into the land of the Philistines, he fell from the pinnacle of success.

D. For about twenty years David lived a successful life while on the throne of Israel. Then his success turned to utter failure when he committed adultery with Bathsheba.

E. What about us? In 1980 we too find it easy to be lifted up with pride. We like to take the credit and glory for our successes. Like David, we too then will become candidates for failure. We will fail because we too will stop consulting God. Like David we will take matters into our own hands. The ultimate end of such folly is failure. (Jer 10:23, Prov 14:12, I Cor 10:12)

IV David Misinterpreted His Success And Popularity As God's Blanket Approval Of All He Did

A. David grew greater and greater because God was with him. (II Sam 5:10)

B. But did God approve his flight into the land of the Philistines? No. David also took unto himself many wives and concubines. Did God approve? No. (Deut 17:17) Good reader, while David was viewed as a success in the eyes of his fellow Israelites, he was failing spiritually. The truth of the matter is that David reached his spiritual peak during and shortly after his victory over Goliath.

C. What about us? Must we follow in David's footsteps? No. Though we must go through the valleys to get to the mountain peaks, we do not have to stay in the valley as David did.

D. We must be careful in the twentieth century not to confuse popularity and success with God's blanket approval of our lives. Mt 5:45 says that God pours out his blessings on the good and the evil, the just and the unjust. Success in the church can often bring about spiritual pride and competition. The ultimate end of these things is a fruitless and carnal life.

V David's Sins Disqualified Him From Correcting His Children Who Were Doing The Same Things

A. What could David say to Amnon when he raped Tamar? After all David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

B. What could David say to Absalom who killed Amnon? After all David had Uriah killed.

C. What about us? Have we destroyed our creditability with our children? Do we tell them do what I say and not what I do? Do they think we are hypocrites?

D. We must be able to do what Paul said in Eph 6:4.

VI Finally, Each Tine David Confessed His Sins With A Penitent Heart, He Was Forgiven And Restored

A. David openly acknowledged his sins and transgressions. (Psm 51:3)

B. He asked God to hide them and blot them out. (Psm 51:9)

C. He begged God not to take his Holy Spirit from him. He pleaded with God to restore unto him the joy of his salvation. He then promised that he would teach transgressors God's ways. (Psm 51:9–13)

D. We too can find forgiveness if we will confess our sins with penitent hearts. The penitent, confessing child of. God must then go to God in prayer. (I Jno 1:9, Jas 5:16, Acts 8:21–24)

E. Maybe after we do this, we will get back to carrying out Jesus' command to preach the gospel to the lost. (Mk 16:15–16)

Con: Let us now resolve to guard our hearts by consulting with God on a regular basis. Let us never allow success to become a source of corruption in our lives. May we so live that we can exercise wholesome influence and offer good advice to our children that they can and will utilize. Thank God we can with penitent hearts and confessing lips draw nigh unto the throne of grace, that our sins may be forgiven.

MORAL ISSUES

Abortion

Intro: 1. Pro 6:16--17 say that God hates among other things, hands that shed innocent blood. If abortion is not the shedding of innocent blood, I do not know what it is.

2. Brother John Waddey observes that the victims of abortion die without benefit of trial or counsel. They are executed by techniques more cruel and inhumane than we can imagine. He says that the conspirators in abortion are willing mothers, doctors, social workers, and the supreme court. The victims of abortion are not criminals but innocent babies!
3. There are 3,500 abortions in America each day. Each year there are about one and a half million abortions. Many of these are done on teenagers and unwed mothers. World wide figures say that forty to fifty five million abortions occur each year!
4. Someone observed that thirty percent of all pregnancies are now aborted!
5. In 1975 there were more abortions than births in New York city!
6. Consider these facts. More die of abortion in America now than in all the wars and traffic accidents that we have had! Compared to what is happening in America, the Pharoah's effort to kill all male Hebrews and Herod's effort to kill all males two years of age and under, look like child's play!

I A History Of Abortion

A. Records indicate that abortion was going on as far back as 3,000 B.C.

B. Assyria was plagued with abortions. Penalty for having one was impalement.

C. The Romans and Greeks encouraged abortion. Out of abortion in these two cultures grew "infanticide". Babies were born and if not the right sex or if they had deformities they were thrown on a garbage heap to die. The early Christians saw this as murder and rescued many of them. Some of the first orphan homes were designed to take care of these babies. Incidentally, one brother from one of our brotherhood orphan homes said that they were not getting the small babies anymore. They were either adopted or aborted.

D. In the fourth century Augustine said that the soul entered the fetus at forty days for the male and eighty days for the female.

E. Thomas Aquinas said that the soul entered the fetus when the mother felt movement.

F. English common law and Colonial America adopted the views of Thomas Aquinas.

G. It was not until 1869 that a Pope declared that abortion after conception was sin.

H. It is interesting to note that there were no laws on the books concerning abortion for the first seventy-five years of American history. Basic Christian beliefs seemed to have kept it under control.

I. After the Civil War the states passed their own aborttion laws. Basically they said that abortion was forbidden except in cases where the mother's life was endangered.

J. When the twentieth century rolled around Christianity's influence was on the decline and secular humanism was on the rise. Secular humanism sees man as a product of evolution. Man is different from the animals only in his superior intelligence. Humanism denies the supernatural.

K. After World War II Christianity was on the upsurge again. Many say that because of a misunderstanding between church and state, most government jobs were not filled with Bible believing people.

L. As time passed people began to complain that women had to go to back alley butchers if they wanted an abortion.

M. By 1961 the American Law Institute said that women ought to be allowed to have an abortion if the mother's life was endangered, if the child was going to be born with defects, or if the woman was a victim of rape or incest.

N. So on January 22, 1973 with a vote of 7–2, the Supreme Court abolished all state laws on abortion and said in effect that abortion should be granted on demand during the first six months of pregnancy. Most of the mainline denominations were for this decision!

II Objections To Arguments Against Abortion

A. We are told that, that which is in the womb of woman is not life, it is only an appendage of the woman's body. If the fetus is not life, what is it? It is the product of two lives. If it is not human, is it animal or vegetable? The abortionists insult our intelligence!

B. Some argue that Adam was not alive until God breathed into his nostrils. Then we are told, man became a living soul. (Gen 2:7) They say, since the fetus cannot breathe until it is outside the womb, it is not life and does not have a soul. Yet, the baby receives oxygen through the umbilical cord!

C. Ex 21:22–25 is used by abortionists to find scriptural justification for their views. The text says that if two men are striving and hurt a woman with child and her fruit depart from her, so that no mischief shall follow, he shall be punished according as the husband shall lay upon him and he shall pay as the judge shall determine, but if mischief follows, it shall be life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, and a stripe for a stripe. The abortionists say this passage teaches:

1. If the baby dies because of a miscarriage, a fine is levied.

2. If the mother dies, the man will be put to death.
3. Therefore the unborn are not persons.

D. Look at the word "fruit" in that text. It is found seventy-two times in the Bible and is rendered, "child as in the text, boy, son, or young man."

E. Looking at the broader context consider verses 28–32. If an ox gore a freeman, the ox and owner are to be put to death. If an ox gore a slave, a fine is to be levied. Are we to conclude that because a lighter fine was imposed on the killing of a slave that a slave is not a person? Is this not the same reasoning in Ex 21: 22–25? If not why not?

F. Consider also this interpretation of Ex 21:22–25. If the phrase "and yet no harm or mischief follows" means, if a miscarriage occurs and the baby or mother does not die, a fine only shall be imposed. But if the mother or child dies, the person responsible shall be put to death. Does not this make prenatal life equal to adult life?

G. What if the mother's life is threatened? I have always said I think the mother's life should be saved. There is a difference between aborting a baby that someone doesn't want or a baby that is the result of an illicit love affair, and aborting a baby to save the mother's life!

H. What about an abortion where there has been rape? The baby's life should be saved and the child should be put out for adoption. It is a shame that rapists are not getting the death penalty. It is too cruel and inhumane we are told. The rapist spends a few years behind bars and then goes free. The innocent baby receives captial punishment! No wonder America is in real trouble.

I. If a baby will be born defective, can it be aborted? Well, is all life sacred or just some? Is a defective baby in the womb human? Is a defective baby human after birth? Are we going to eliminate all who are not perfect? How perfect must one be to live? Who will decide? Consider now Ex 4:11, "Who made man's mouth? Who makes the dumb, the deaf, the seeing, the blind, have not I the Lord?" God's ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. (Isa 55:8–9) God does not see as man seeth. (I Sam 16:9)

J. What would you do in this situation? The mother has tuberculosis. The father has syphilis. The first child is born blind. The second died at birth. The third was deaf and dumb. The fourth also had tuberculosis. Now a fifth child is to be born. Should the parents abort? If so, you have just killed Beethoven!

III The Bible And Abortion

A. The word abortion is not found in the Bible. But the Bible has several principles that help us to determine our stand on this issue.

B. The Bible teaches the humanity of the unborn.

1. Job 31:15
2. Jer 1:5
3. Ecc 11:5
4. Mt 1:18, 20, 23
5. Lk 1:41
6. Job 10:11–12
7. Psm 139:13
8. Gal 1:15–16

C. Life is precious because it comes from God and because man is made in the image of God. (Acts 17:25, Ruth 4:3, Gen 17:16, 30:22, Zach 12:1, Gen 1:27, 9:6)

D. Jesus taught us the worth of each person in these verses.

1. Mt 7:12, 18:3, 19:14, 28:18–20
2. Jno 3:16, Lk 19:10

E. There is no distinction between life in the womb and the new born. The word "brephos" that is used to describe the babe that leaped in the womb of Elizabeth is also used to describe the new born or infant.

F. Let us not forget scriptures like Ex 20:13, Rom 13:9, Rom 1:31, and Lev 24:17 which teach us that life is sacred.

G. God wants us to protect innocent lives.
   1. Ex 23:7
   2. Prov 24:11–12

Con: 1. In 1939 Hitler began to kill the retarded, prisoners, and the old. He murdered four hundred thousand of them. Then he began the extermination of the Jews. Six million were killed. Only three German churches protested Hitler's actions.
2. Since 1973 we have murdered more innocent human beings in America than Hitler. What about us? Have we spoken out?
3. In America a man can be fined $500.00 for killing an eagle. Yet, one can kill an innocent child through abortion and receive no sentence at all!

Homosexuality

Intro: 1. The word homosexual used to refer to the zenith of human indecency.
2. Now we are told that homosexuality is normal. It should be viewed as an alternative lifestyle.
3. Apparently many Americans believe this. There are anywhere from ten to twenty million homosexuals here.
4. Many of our lawmakers are convinced that it is an alternative lifestyle. There is a bill before congress that would promote so called "gay rights." Do our lawmakers not look at history? History shows that homosexuality reaches pandemic levels when society is in crisis and near a state of collapse. If the current bill before our congress passes, the homosexuals will be viewed as another minority such as blacks, women, and Hispanics. I tell you good reader that

wherever Uncle Sam has his money, there will be homosexuals. You must hire them as you would any other minority. They will have to be admitted to our Christian colleges that are depending more and more on government grants.

5. Do you know that there is a Lesbian home for child homosexuals in New Jersey?
6. Fifty percent of all homocides and suicides have homosexuals involved in them.
7. I am told that homosexuals die younger. They are more prone to physical, mental, and emotional illness. They are also prone to alcoholism.
8. One of the most repulsive things about homosexuality is this. The Lutheran church recently admitted them into the membership of this denomination. One group of Presbyterians declared not long ago that they could not say that homosexuality is sin. That is because they have no real respect for the scriptures!
9. A further extension of the revulsion that is associated with homosexuality is the establishment of a homosexual church called, the Metropolitan Community Church. A homosexual church is as much a contradiction of terms as a Christian Devil! There are one hundred and ten such congregations with about sixty-seven thousand members.
10. To show you how strong the movement known as gay rights is even in the so called Bible belt, there was a conference of Lesbians and Gays at the Holiday Inn Rivermont in Memphis, Tennessee in August of 1980.

I Homosexuality Is Not New

A. Let us take an historical survey.

B. Sodom

1. Gen 13:13 said that the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehvovah exceedingly.
2. In Gen 18:20 says that their sins were very grievious.

Ten righteous souls could not be found in that city. (Gen 18:32)
   3. The men of Sodom wanted to "know" the men in Lot's house. (Gen 19:4–5) From Gen 4:1 we learn that the word "know" refers to sexual relationships.
   4. God destroyed these wicked cities with fire and brimestone. (Gen 19:24–28)
   5. Deut 23:17 warns that there will be no Sodomite among the sons of Israel.
   6. See also Isa 3:9, 13:19, Jer 23:14, 50:40, Amos 4:11, II Pet 2:6, Jude 7.

C. The Old Testment view of homosexuality is plain.
   1. Lev 18:22 says, thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind, it is an abomination.
   2. Lev 18:24–30 says that homosexuality defiles.
   3. Those who engage in homosexuality are to be put to death. (Lev 20:13)

D. Ancient Israel did not escape involvement in this sin.
   1. Isa 3:9, 12
   2. The Hebrew word for "women" in verse twelve describes, "women-like men or effeminate men acting like women." Israel was being ruled by homosexuals!

E. The Kingdom of Judah
   1. Ezk 16:49–50 says that Judah's sister was Sodom! Judah was characterized by pride, fulness of bread, abundance of idleness or prosperous ease. Judah like Sodom did not strengthen the hands of the needy. Both Sodom and Judah were involved in abomination or idolatry. Notice the characteristics of people who are associated with homosexuality. These factors became a breeding ground for the production of homosexuality.
   2. It is tragic to note that Solomon's son Rehoboam allowed Sodimites in the land. (I Kings 14:24) Asa, Rehoboam's successor did right. Right among other things included the putting of the sodomites out of the land! (I Kings 15:11–12) The good king

Josiah broke down the houses of the sodomites. (II Kings 22:7)

F. Summing up the Old Testament view of homosexuality, we can say that it was grievious in God's sight. It was an abomination. It was associated with idolatry. Righteousness was abolishing homosexuality.

G. Homosexuality was prominent among the Egyptian Pharoahs.

H. It was widespread among the Greeks. Socrates, Plato, and Alexander the Great were homosexuals.

I. Roman society was laden with homosexuality. Fourteen out of the first fifteen Caesars were homosexuals.

J. The New Testament also has something to say about homosexuality. (Rom 1:18–29)

  1. Homosexuality is associated with ungodliness and holding the truth in unrighteousness. (v 18)
  2. Homosexuals are unclean and dishonor their bodies. (v 24)
  3. They burn in their lusts. They are shameful and have a reprobate mind. (v 29)
  4. They are worthy of death. (Rom 1:32)

K. Paul told the Corinthians that the unrighteous could not inherit the kingdom of God. Among those listed as unrighteous were the effeminate and the abusers of themselves with men. These of course were homosexuals.

L. Abusers of themselves with men are listed among those who are living contrary to sound doctrine. (I Tim 1:10)

M. The New Testament says that homosexuals cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The Roman letter says that God will give them up. Homosexuality is contrary to sound doctrine. Deuteronomy 23:18 says that the hire of a harlot or the wages of a dog (homosexual) will not be brought into the house of Jehovah. They are an abomination. Outside the gates of heaven are the dogs. Heaven will not permit homosexuals! (Rev 22:15)

II Arguments Made By Homosexuals

A. Most all sinners try to justify their sins. Many even try to go the Bible to do so!

B. Homosexuals today say that the sins of Genesis eighteen and nineteen were a lack of hospitality and rape. How utterly ridiculous! They are grasping for straws.

C. Many gays say that homosexuality was only condemned in the Old Testament. Since we are no longer living under that law, we are free from those restrictions. Some even say that Jesus never condemned homosexuality. When Jesus specified fornication as the only scriptural cause for divorce, he touched on homosexuality. One of the broader meanings of fornication is homosexuality. (Mt 5:32, 19:9) Jesus often referred to Sodom and Gomorrah. He believed that those events took place. The mentioning of these cities and their wickedness shows that Jesus recognized that they got what they deserved by way of punishment. We have already shown in this lesson that the New Testament also calls homosexuality a sin. Those who practice it are sinners and worthy of death. (Rom 18–32)

D. Many perverts argue that they can't help the way they are. They blame it on hormones or genes. Others blame it on glanular trouble. Not so! Doctors deny this.

E. Yet, others say that God asked for the death penalty in Leviticus 20:13 not because homosexuality was wrong, but because God wanted to see the population of Israel continue to grow. How utterly stupid!

F. My friends, God almighty wants heterosexuality. God created us male and female. It is his will that man leaves father and mother, so that he can cling to his wife. They are to be one flesh. (Gen 1:27, 2:24)

III Causes Of Homosexuality

A. A dominating mother is one major cause. Especially a mother who puts down the masculinity of her son. Many mothers treat their sons as if they were the daughters they did not have.

B. A bad experience in the male-female relationship leads to homosexuality.
C. Excessive kissing and fondling by parents or anyone may well lead to this perversion.
D. Over protection of the child is another cause.
E. Fathers that desert the family or fathers that are too busy and cruel often produce an atmosphere in which homosexuality springs up.
F. Society plays a major role in producing gays. The unisex society that we live in is seeking to blot out the distinction between the sexes. Television, movies, books, and pornography that portray homosexuality as normal or exciting are to blame.
G. Quite clearly to me, a failure to understand and function in our God given family roles is a major contributor to this horrible sin.
H. A failure to maintain a proper relationship with God and his word will foster the possibility of homosexuality.

IV The Grave Dangers of Homosexuality

A. Homosexuality will double in this nation and around the world if it is not brought under control.
B. Homosexuals will be recruiting our children. This has been happening around our nation lately.
C. Homosexuality will endanger the civil rights of other Americans. Just wait and see!
D. Leniency towards the gay rights movement will bring an increase in crime and sadistic murders.
E. Good readers, if homosexuality becomes normal, what about rape, adultery, and incest? Will they be next? If not why not?
F. Christians have some responsibilities to exercise in regards to this moral problem.
   1. We need to educate ourselves.
   2. We need to teach the nation and the world what the Bible says. We need to try to strengthen family relationships. We need to know that wherever homo-

sexuality flourishes, the nation is in a state of crisis and decline!

3. We must treat the gays with compassion. We must dispel the myth that once a person is a gay, he is always a gay. Some of the Corinthian Christians were gay. Yet, they were washed, sanctified, and justified. (I Cor 6:11)
4. But let us add to that compassion a measure of righteous indignation that will cause to warn them that if they don't stop this abomination, they will incur the wrath of God!

Euthanasia or Mercy Killing

Intro: 1. Perhaps you can remember when grandma died. The doctor came and told the family that he had done all that he could do. He waited with the family. Grandma died. The women washed her body. The men made her casket and dug her grave. A memorial service was conducted, then life had to get back to normal.

2. Advances in medicine have changed this scene dramatically. We can now keep people alive on heart pump machines, kidney machines, respirators, and with the so called miracle drugs. Thus, people are living longer. The question that is on many minds today is how long should we keep people alive on machines? How high should we allow the hospital bill to go?
3. The answer to these and other dilemmas associated with the advancement of medical technology is "euthanasia." "Euthanasia" means, "good or easy death. Some have called it mercy killing."
4. There are two kinds of euthanasia. There is active euthanasia. This is the taking of purposeful actions to end life. Giving a patient an injection to termi-

nate his life would be an example of this. Then there is passive euthanasia. This is a refusal to use life sustaining medical technology to prolong life, when there is no hope for recovery.

5. Euthanasia is not new. In 1939 the Euthanasia Society of America was founded by Charles Potter. Today it is headed by Joseph Fletcher the advocate of situation ethics. It is known now as The Right To Die Indicate.
6. We are being told that there is a "death pill" that will soon be available and even obligatory by the end of this century. It will be available at "Suicide Clinics." These will be places where people can go to end their lives if they are terminally ill. Or if you think that you have lived long enough and want your life to end, this clinic will enable you to die with dignity! There are forty states that have the so called "right to die" legislation before them.

I There Is A Battle Raging

A. There is a battle raging between lawyers, physicians, and theologians. They are fighting over many things. Among them are these two questions.

B. What is death?

1. Some say that death is the permanent cessation of all vital functions. Death is simply the end of life.
2. Others argue for clinical death which is when the heart stops and there is no breathing.
3. Many talk about biological death, which is the degeneration of all tissues to the point that they can no longer function or be reversed by medical science.
4. Yet, others say that when there is no spontaneous respiration, no reflexes, and a flat EEG brain wave, a person is dead.
5. The Biblical definition of death is very simple. James 2:26 says that death is the separation of the body from the spirit. See also Gen 25:8, 35:29.

C. Another question that is being hotly contested is who will be the victims of euthanasia if it is implemented?
   1. We are told that those who are terminally ill should be killed mercifully.
   2. So should the mentally ill, the severely handicapped, and the elderly who cannot take care of themselves.
   3. In other words, any life that does not have a redeeming social value should be terminated. Lives without purpose should end.

D. How in the world can people arrive at such judgments? Who would carry these things out? The answer is not difficult to understand. If God does not exist then nothing is morally wrong! Here we see the influence of evolution. If you believe in evolution, you cannot believe in God. The Bible does not support the doctrine of "theistic evolution." The fruit of evolution is atheism. Another fruit is humanism which denies the supernatural. Humanism sees the world getting only when men reach down and pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. Yet another fruit of evolution is materialism. This philosophy says in effect that nothing exists that cannot be proven with the five senses. Now we cannot understand the advocates of euthanasia.

II Some Questions For The Euthanasia Advocates

A. We are told that the time comes when some lives would be better off if they were terminated. Who should be terminated? The incurable, say some. Who can define incurable? Diseases that were once incurable are no longer in existence.

B. Another question is who will decide who should live and who should die? Will the doctor make that decision? Or will it be the family? Some say a panel or even the patient himself. Who will step out and play God? Dr. Christian Barnard said recently that people did not accuse doctors of playing God when they saved life but are doing so now that they are advocating euthanasia. I have got news for the famous doctor. He never healed anyone. God did the healing through the doctors and medicine. They are merely instruments through which God acts! God is the giver of all life. (Gen 2:7, Acts 17:25) God alone has the right to take life. (Job 1:21)

C. Advocates ask us if we don't agree with them that suffering is pointless, degrading, and demoralizing. We answer no! We ask, have you ever read the Bible? James 1:2–3 states that Christians should rejoice in suffering because suffering has a way of maturing and drawing us nearer to our God. In fact Paul said, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to his purpose." (Rom 8:28)

D. Do the advocates of euthanasia realize how precious life is to men? Many people have been so sick that the doctors have given up and predicted their death. Others have been so sick that they thought they were going to die. Then they got well! They were glad to be alive. Eighty-five percent of those suicide victims who have been revived have stated that they were glad they did not die!

III The Bible And Euthanasia

A. The Bible does not have the word euthanasia in it. Yet, there are certain principles that can be used to deal with this problem.

B. The Bible says plainly and simply, thou shalt not kill. (Ex 20:13, Rom 13:9) God hates the hands of those who shed innocent blood. (Prov 6:16–17) God warns, whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man. (Gen 9:6)

C. Rather than killing the aged, we should honor them. (Lev 19:32)

D. The poor would certainly be on the hit list of the advocates of euthanasia because they are of no value to society. They only take from society. Yet, the Bible says that we are to help the poor not kill them. (Prov 21:13, Gal 2:10, Isa 1:11)

E. We are to honor our parents. (Eph 6:2) Putting them to death is not what God had in mind. See also I Timothy 5:4, 8

F. Could Christians engage in euthanasia in light of these verses? (Gal 6:2, Heb 13:1, Rom 15:1, I Pet 2:17)

G. The handicapped that work a hardship on society are among those to be terminated. Paul said that we are to be longsuffering towards all. (I Thess 5:14) Are the handicapped an exception? We are to do good to all men. (Gal 6:10) That includes those who are supposedly a burden to their fellowmen.

H. Job's wife may have been an advocate of euthanasia when she told Job to curse God and die. (Job 2:9–10) Job did not take her advice. It is a good thing he didn't. In the end Job was blessed far more than in the beginning.

I. Advocates of euthanasia are without natural affection which is worthy of death. (Rom 1:31–32)

J. You cannot engage in euthanasia and practice the golden rule of Mt 7:12 which says, do unto others as you would have them to do unto you. (paraphrased)

K. In II Sam 1:1–16 we read of an Amalekite who thought that Saul could not live in his condition, so he helped to end Saul's life. David ordered him killed! Does that tell us anything about God's attitude?

L. Jesus extended life three times. He raised from the dead, Jarius' daughter, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus. (Mt 9:18–19, 23:26, Lk 7:11–18, Jno 11:43)

M. Any way you look at it, euthanasia cheapens humanity's view of life. Man's inhumanity to man is bad enough as it is!

Con: Brother John Waddey points out our sad plight in this nation. We protest the killing of baby seals and other endangered species. We have humane societies and laws which protect animals from cruelty. Yet, we kill innocent human beings through abortion and through possible euthanasia. Where are those who rise up and speak out about the taking of human life which is the most precious form of life of all! How inconsistent and blind we human beings are. May God almighty wake us up before it is too late.

Suicide

Intro: 1. Batsell Barrett Baxter tells of a girl in England, who leaped to her death from the window of a cathedral, because she found that life was not worth living. She committed suicide.

2. Suicide comes from two Latin words, "sui" which means, "oneself" and "cidium" which means, "to intentionally kill."
3. Suicide is a major social, moral, and spiritual problem.
4. Twenty-five thousand people committ suicide in America each year. This means that about fifty-five a day or one every half hour. Some suggest that there may be fifty thousand cases that go unproven.
5. Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death. One thousand people a day kill themselves around the world. Worldwide figures say that each year there are three million suicides.
6. Suicide has had a traumatic effect on youth. Suicide is the fourth leading killer of teenagers. It is the second leading killer of college aged young people in this nation.
7. It is interesting to note that Protestants are most likely to committ suicide. Then it is the Catholics followed by Jews. Where would we in Churches of

Christ fit into this?

8. I believe that we must preach on suicide so that we can gain a better understanding of it and so that we can keep ourselves from being victims of it.

I Bible Suicides

A. The Bible tells us that suicides are not new. There were seven recorded in the scriptures.
   1. Abimilech committed suicide because he did not want it said that he was killed by a woman. Judges 9:54
   2. Sampson committed suicide because he wanted revenge on the Philistines. Judges 16:30
   3. Saul killed himself because he did not want to be killed by the Philistines. I Samuel 31:4
   4 Saul's armourbearer also killed himself. Perhaps he felt like he had an obligation to die with his master or maybe he too wanted to escape death by the enemy. I Samuel 31:5
   5 Ahitophel hung himself because his counsel was not followed. II Samuel 17:23
   6 Zimri committed suicide when his treason against the city of Tizrah was exposed. I Kings 16:18
   7. Judas hung himself after betraying Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Matthew 27:4–5

B. The Philippian jailer tried to committ suicide after the prison doors opened. Paul urged him to spare his life because the prisoners were all there.

II Some Misconceptions

A. It is not true that only a certain class of people committ suicide. The rich and the poor committ suicide. So do the educated, the ignorant, the high, and the low in our society. No category of men is exempt.

B. It is a myth to believe that those who talk about suicide do not take their lives. Eighty percent of those who talk about it, do it.

C. Let it also be pointed out that suicidal tendencies are not inherited.

D. All suicide victims are not mentally ill. The Japanese pilots who smashed their planes into American ships in World War II were not insane. Many Hindu women throw themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands.

III Why Do People Take Their Own Lives?

A. Medical authorites offer some of the following reasons. I would like for us to look at these reasons in light of the Bible.

B. Some cannot cope with problems. Paul said that we could do anything with the strength of Christ. (Phil 4:13)

C. Insanity plays a role in some suicides. Certainly the Bible teaches us to guard our hearts for out of them proceed all of the issues of life. (Prov 4:23) As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. (Prov 23:7) Paul said, whatsoever things are honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. (Phil 4:8) We must be guardians of the mind. What we allow to enter our minds will either make us potential suicide victims or keep us away from suicidal tendencies.

D. Loneliness is the cause of many suicides.God has promised to be with his people who will carry out his will. (Mt 28:20) He will in no wise fail us, neither will he in any wise forsake us. (Heb 13:5)

E. Shame and guilt have caused many to take their lives. Psalms fifty-one shows us that we can overcome shame and guilt like David did. He was one of the most guilt-ridden characters of the Bible. Yet, he overcame his sin and became the most often mentioned Old Tetsament character in the New Testament.

F. A failure to reach the standards set by others motivates some to blow their brains out. Parents and friends often set standards for others, that they themselves never reached. I tell you friends that the only standards that any man really needs to worry about reaching are the standards of God that are found in the Bible. We will be judged by the Bible. (Jno 12:48, Rom 2:2, Jno 17:17, 8: 31–32)

G. Vengeance belongeth to me, I will repay saith the Lord. (Heb 10:30) In spite of this fact, many human beings try to get revenge on each other. Some do so by committing suicide. This is the way that they get back at their families and friends.

H. Others committ suicide as a reaction to some tragic calamity in their lives. Many souls are confronted with the shock of loosing a loved one or their health. Job said, naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return. (Jno 1:21) Job had just lost his family, wealth, and later his health. We must remember that as much as we love our family, we must love Jesus more. (Matthew 10:34–39) We will not sustain the earthly relationships with them in the next world. (Matthew 22:30) We must also keep in mind that a man's life cannot be measured by the amount of earthly goods in his possession. (Luke 12:15) Let's go back to the last part of Job 1:21 and say with Job, Jehovah giveth and Jehovah taketh away, blessed be the name of Jehovah.

I. Many lack purpose. They have no reason to live. The purpose for man's existence is to fear God and keep his commandments. (Ecc 12:13) We exist to glorify God in all that we do. (I Cor 10:31) In the final analysis, if your life is not Christ centered, you will have lived in vain. The reasons for your existence will be utterly worthless.

IV What Will Be The Fate Of Suicide Victims?

A. Certanly, I am not God and do not claim to have all the answers. I would offer these thoughts for your consideration.

B. Someone has observed that if sin has brought the individual to the point where he chooses death over life, there is no hope. Saul and Judas would be examples. (I Sam 31:4, Mt 27:4–5) But if suicide is brought on by physical or mental illness that has no relationship to sin, there may be some hope. Samson's example of a life of faith in Hebrews 11:32 is a good illustration of this view.

V What Is Sinful About Suicide?

A. In Exodus 20:13 and in Romans 13:9 God said, thou shalt not kill. When one kills himself, he has committed a sin that he cannot repent of.

B. Suicide shows a lack of faith in God. Without faith one cannot please God. The faithless will be in hell. (Heb 11:6, Rev 21:8)

C. Suicide treats the priceless gift of life as if it were worthless. Genesis 9:6 says that you kill a person, your life will be taken because man is made in the image of God! We are like God. This is what makes life precious. Life is precious because it comes from God. (Gen 2:7)

D. Paul said that in the last days there would be men who would be lovers of self. (II Tim 3:2) This prediction is fulfilled in suicide. The person that takes his own life is selfish. He has no consideration of those who will be left behind. In my ministry, I've witnessed incalculable suffering as a result of a family member who has committed suicide. In some ways suicide is the ultimate injustice to family and freinds. The potential suicide victim should ask himself, whether or not he would like to be left behind by a family member or friend. Would he like to suffer the indignities associated with being a friend or family member? The shame, sorrow, or even guilt are too much for most people to bear, who become victims, along with the victims of the suicide.

E. Paul wrote to Timothy and said, suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ. (II Tim 2:3) God never promised that life would be easy. In fact he told us that it would be characterized by persecutions and tribulations. (II Tim 3:12, Jno 16:33) Many souls reject this concept of life. They refuse to accept the will of God in their lives, if it does not fit into their preconceived notions. Suicide often says that men will not accept the will of God or the law of God in their lives. Jesus said, not my will but thine be done. (Lk 22:44) This attitude would save many lives.

F. Suicide destroys the temple of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies are sacred as Christians. They were bought with the blood of Christ. God expects us to offer them as a living sacrifice. Our bodies like all else do not belong to us. We are just stewards of that which belongs to God. (I Cor 6:19–20, Acts 20:28, Eph 1:7, Rom 12: 1–2, Psm 50:10, I Cor 4:1–2)

VI Some Positive Suggestions To Keep Us From Committing Suicide

A. We have already seen that we often become too occupied with self. (Mt 22:37–39, II Tim 3:2) Our lives should be Christ centered and others oriented.

B. Life is sacred. This is the message of, thou shalt not kill. (Ex 20:13, Rom 13:9)

C. We must shun extremism. We live in a pressure packed society that drives most of us to the extremes in life. Christians should practice moderation and self control. (Phil 4:5, II Pet 1:6)

D. If we abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul and if we abstain from all appearance of evil, we will keep ourselves from situations that could motivate us to kill ourselves.

E. We must talk to God and he must talk to us. We do this through prayer and Bible study. Men and women who have an intimate relationship with Jesus will want to live so that they can glorify God and serve him as long as possible in this life. (Lk 18:1, II Tim 2:15, I Cor 10:31) If we will walk in the light the blood of Christ will keep us clean and holy. (I Jno 1:7) People who are clean and holy have no reason to want life to come to an abrupt end.

F. Realizing that things aren't always as bad as they seem should help us. It would help us to see things as God sees them. Man looks on the outer appearance but God looks at the heart. God's thoughts and ways are not as man's thoughts and ways. They are much higher than man can imagine. (I Sam 16:9, Isa 55:8–9)

G. We need to fear the consequences of suicide. Jesus has the power to send our souls to hell. (Mt 10:28)

H. When all others fail, God won't. In Psalms 27:10 the Bible says, when my mother and father forsake me, then will Jehovah take me up. God will in no wise fail or forsake us. (Heb 13:5)

I. We like Paul must learn to accept our lot in life. (Phil 4:11–13) Someone said, no matter what your lot in life is, build something on it.

J. We must also learn to live in the present. Jesus said, be not anxious for the morrow. (Mt 6:34)

Con: We probably would never blow our brains out in suicide. Yet, how many are committing slow suicide? How many are going to their graves before their time because they have failed to follow some of the Bible suggestions offered in this lesson. Many are committing spiritual suicide. Each day that they continue to pile up sins and iniquities. Sooner or later and probably sooner than later, they will be called before the judgement bar of God to give an account of the deeds done in the body, yea even the secret things. (II Cor 5:10, Rom 14:12, Ecc 12:14)

Women's Lib and Equal Rights

Intro: 1. Brother Glen Ramsey in a lesson on the Equal Rights Amendment listed some communist goals for America. These were printed in the 1963 edition of the Congressional Journal.

2. The communists would like for homosexuality, promiscuity, and degeneracy to be viewed as normal, natural, and healthy.
3. They want to infiltrate the churches and replace revealed righteousness with a social religion.
4. They want to discredit the Bible.
5. Destruction of the family is another goal. Adultery and divorce are to be perceived as normal.
6. Intellectual maturity they say does not need religion as a crutch.
7. Communists must be very happy because they are very successful in achieving their goals. Certainly the women's liberation movement and the push for the equal rights amendment have helped them more than we will ever know!

I What Is The Equal Rights Amendment?

A. The equal rights amendment says that equal rights will not be denied by the United States or any state on account of sex. Congress is to enforce this amendment with legislation. It is to take effect two years after ratification.

B. None of us are against equal pay and opportunities for women. But there is a little more to this amendment than meets the eye. NOW, the National Organization of Women is behind the equal rights amendment. Some of their announced goals are these:

1. Pass the equal rights amendment.
2. They want the government to provide government funded child care centers for all children.
3. They want free abortion, sterilization, and contraceptives.
4. They are pushing for pro-lesbian legislation.
5. They want the elimination of all preference that is now given to veterans.
6. They would like to take away the tax exempt status of churches.

    7. They want women to no longer be exempt from the draft.
    8. They want churches to be involved in helping women to get abortions and to provide contraceptives.

C. To show you what kind of people we are dealing with, consider this. This amendment was to be passed by March of 1979. It still lacks about three states. Now they have been granted an extention to March of 1982.

D. Women's rights are protected by the fourteenth amendment, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972!

II What Will It Mean If This Amendment Is Passed?

A. We will move towards a unisex society. There will be no more all male or female schools. Organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts will cease to exist. Even religious organizations like the YMCA and the YWCA will be challenged. Dormitories in colleges will be co-ed. Many are already. Men and women will share the same rest rooms. Many laugh at this and say it is a scare tactic but it is already happening in places like New York and California!

B. Womanhood will be greatly effected.

    1. Women will go into combat. Many will be killed, injured, or taken as prisoners. Women in our army today are a serious problem. So many have been raped in Germany that they go around with guards! Thirty percent wind up pregnant. What kind of an army do we have? Will it be able to defend our nation?
    2. This amendment would wipe out the obligation of husbands and fathers to support their wives and kids. It is bad enough now! Think of the divorced husbands who are behind on their alimony payments. The state of Maryland has passed their own

state equal rights amendment. Under this new law women are criminally liable to support their husbands and to pay their debts.

3. This new law would wipe out the woman's right to keep the children in case of divorce.
4. It would wipe out specially designed laws that protect women from various sex crimes.
5. It would eliminate special laws that protect widows. The state of Florida has a law that gives widows a tax break on their property.
6. In Massachusetts, when they passed the state equal rights amendment or bill, insurance rates for women went up in only four days!
7. The equal rights amendment and the women's liberation movement are a serious challenge to Christian womanhood!
   a. Gen 2:18 b. I Cor 11:3, 8–9 c. I Pet 3:7

C. The family will be greatly effected by this amendment.

1. Marriage we are told is good only for the man. It is man's way of controlling women. It makes women nothing more than slaves or second class citizens. To deny the sanctity of marriage is to reject God who instituted marriage and the home. (Mt 19:4–6)
2. The God given role of the husband and father is rejected by this movement. The husband is the head of the wife and the wife must be in subjection to him. The woman must reverence her husband. (Eph 5:22, 23, 33) The husband is also to nurture the children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. (Eph 6:4) The feminists say that these concepts of the husband and father are steeped in legend and myth. They want the government and not the home to be responsible for raising the children.
3. Children would be greatly effected. Feminist leader Gloria Steinem said, "By the year 2,000 A.D. I hope we will raise our children to believe in human potential and not God. She and others are strong

advocates of government financed child care centers. They want to take the children out of the families and put them under government control. In other words, let Uncle Sam raise them. That is contrary to Ephesians six and Titus two and a host of other scriptures. You may not know it but this is what communism is doing! Could it be that this movement is communist inspired? With their strong stand on abortion millions of innocent children will never come out of their mother's wombs alive. Furthermore, by requiring schools and churches to get involved in abortion, sterilization, and contraceptives, this movement seeks to take away the family right to provide sex education for our children.

4. The feminist movements will have a devastating effect on human life as just noted. Abortion is murder. That which is in the mother's womb is not a blob of tissue or an appendage to the mother's body. It is said of Rebecca that the "children struggled within her." There were nations in her womb. These children were Jacob and Esau, two well known Bible characters. (Gen 25:22–23)
5. Morality will suffer if the feminists prevail. We have already been talking about abortion. They are also for homosexuality. The Bible teaches heterosexuality. God made two sexes. (Gen 1:27) He expects them to leave their parents and cleave to those who are of opposite sex. (Gen 2:24) They are so pro-homosexual that they advocate that homosexuality should be viewed as normal. They should be allowed to teach in our schools, marry one another, and adopt children. Furthermore, these women say that homosexuals should be allowed to file joint tax returns. Their hatred of men is so intense that some advocate homosexuality as a way to get back at men! The Bible teaches that homosexuality will lead to death. (Duet 23:17, Rev 22:15, Rom 1:24, 27, 32) Finally, these women pride themselves in

their use of vulgar, abusive, obnoxious, and offensive language. They need to read (Mt 12:36–37).

6. The church will definitely feel the passage of this amendment. We in churches of Christ do not believe that the Bible permits women to serve in leadership positions.
   1. Women cannot serve as elders. Elders are to the husbands of one wife. (I Tim 3:2, Titus 1:6)
   2. Women cannot serve as deacons. (I Tim 3:12) Deacons must be the husbands of one wife.
   3. Women cannot preach the gospel from the public pulpit. It is not permitted. They are to keep silence in the churches. Why? It all goes back to what mother Eve did in the Garden of Eden. She plunged the human race into sin! (I Tim 2:12–13, I Cor 14:34)
   4. Feminists will challenge these sacred beliefs in the courts. They will press for a cessation of tax exemption for all churches that will not permit women to serve in these leadership positions. This will extend also to any other institutions such as Christian colleges and orphan homes. Betty Friedman one of the feminist leaders said, No deity will save us, we will save ourselves. Promises of eternal salvation or everlasting damnation are harmful. Another leader, Kate Millet declared, that the oppression that women now suffer goes back to the mythical fall! Thus, these groups are urging women to go back to witchcraft and other female dominated religions.

III New Testament Christianity Elevates Women

A. In the ancient world women were treated as inferior. They were somewhere between a slave and a freeman in the thinking of most men. They were truly second class citizens. The average Jew prayed and thanked God that he was not a slave, Gentile, or woman! Judaism elevated women though in the commandment that calls for the honoring of mother and father. (Ex 20:12) Those who would not show respect to their parents were to be killed. (Duet 21:18) Women could inherit property if there were no sons in the family, following the death of the husband and father. (Num 27)

B. It was a woman who gave birth to the Son of God!
   1. This was foretold in Gen 3:15.
   2. The virgin birth was foretold in Isa 7:14. See also Mt 1:23.
   3. Jesus was born of woman. (Gal 4:4)

C. Women were the first ones to the tomb of Jesus on the resurrection morning. They were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses. (Mk 15:47)

D. Jesus' first post resurrection appearance was to Mary Magdalene. (Mk 16:9) This may have been because the women were the only ones to stand by the cross. The disciples forsook him and fled. (Mk 15:40–41)

E. Women like Phoebe, Euodia, and Syntche were singled out as helping to spread the gospel. They were great servants. (Rom 16:1, Phil 4:3)

F. In I Tim 5:16 women who are widows indeed are to be cared for by the church.

G. In Christ there is spiritual equality for women. (Gal 3:28) Peter said that husbands and wives are joint heirs of the grace of life. (I Pet 3:7)

Con: In conclusion let us observe that women will receive more than equal rights if they are a part of families that are guided by the Bible. Their husbands will love them as Christ loved the church. They will love them as they love their own bodies. (Eph 5:25, 28–29) The sad truth is that many in the feminist movement are misinformed. Others have husbands who have never helped them with the home and the children. Truly, they have been overburdened. Furthermore, others are simply bored with life. Their real problem is no equal rights. They have spiritual problems and need Christ.

He and He alone is the answer to their dilemas. Christ can liberate. If the Son of Man shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. (Jno 8:36) You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. (Jno 8:32) Sanctify them in thy word, thy word is truth. (Jno 17:17)

Pornography

Intro: 1. The dam has broken and our society has been flooded with a deluge of filth in the form of television, movies, books, magazines, and pornography.

2. Pornography is writing or pictures designed to arouse sexual desires.
3. The word pornography comes from two words. "Porne" meant, "to prostitute or filth." The other word is "graphein" which means "to write."
4. Pornography is found in adult bookstores, drug stores, grocery stores, movies and television. It is a big business. Sales in America reach two to three billion dollars a year. Enough pornographic magazines are printed to fill the Empire State building three times! Pornography has grown from Playboy magazine in 1955 to hundreds and even thousands of pornographic magazines in 1980.
5. Supreme Court decisions in this country that declared that obscenity should be defined by the community have gone a long way to help spread this menace.

I What Is Wrong With Pornography?

A. Pornography distorts sex. It turns men away from its God given purpose. It turns sex into mere animal lust.

B. Pornography prostitutes human love. It takes that which is pure and holy and turns it into something that is dirty and vile.

C. Pornography exploits women. It makes them into playthings. It is dehumanizing.

D. Pornography produces lust in the heart which Jesus equates with adultery. (Mt 5:28)

E. Pornography lowers community standards.

1. It promotes homosexuality. Paul said that homosexuals would not be able to enter into the kingdom of God because of this unrighteous act.
2. Pornography promotes bestiality. This word refers to having sexual realtionships with animals. God condemned this in Lev 18:23.
3. Kiddie pornography is one of the latest fruits of pornography. It is estimated that 1.2 million children have been involved in the kiddie porn industry. There are two hundred and sixty-four kiddie porn magazines! How tragic. Someone will answer to God for this. Make no mistake about it.
4. Veneral disease is an outgrowth of reading pornography. I think Paul was referring to veneral disease when he said, "Flee fornication, every sin that a man doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body." (I Cor 6:18)
5. Crimes of a sexual and violent nature are associated with pornography. Law enforcement officials often find pornography on the criminals or in their possessions.
6. Greed and pornography are certainly linked together. Recently the 7 Up company said that it would advertise in pornography as long as it was a profitable market. Apparently it is very profitable.

F. Consider now these observations from a noted psychiatrist, who has studied those hooked on pornography. First he talks of the escalation factor. More and more pornography is read. More and more defiant material is required. It must get rougher and rougher. It must get more and more explicit to satisfy. Secondly, there is a desensitization. That which used to shock such as rape and kiddie porn no longer are seen as deviant. In fact the porno addict rationalizes these things away. Finally, he will try to get his family to do the things that he reads about and sees!

II Let Us Consider Some Arguments Made For Pornography

A. Some say, well Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed. That is true. This was before sin entered into the world. After Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened and they saw their nakedness and were ashamed. They made clothing for themselves. (Gen 3:6, 7)

B. Leviticus 18:6–30 discusses the shame and utter sinfulness of looking upon the nakedness of others.

C. In Luke eight, we read of a demon possessed many by the name of Legion. Before Jesus cast his demons out, he would among other things run around naked. Verse thirty-five says that when he got to his right mind, he clothed himself! Need we say more?

D. Some say, you are just old fashioned and are out of date. You are prudes. No, we are not against sex. All that God made and ordained is good. (Gen 1:31) We are against sex outside the marriage bed. Paul said, "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed is undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." (Heb 13:4)

E. Others say we are just being puritanical. No, the Puritans saw sexual relationships as wrong even in marriage. The puritans were wrong about his. (Gen 2:24)

III Let The Bible Speak

A. We are to love God with all our minds. (Mt 22:38)
   1. Our very thoughts are to be under Christ's control. (II Cor 10:5)
   2. We are to think about the true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely. (Phil 4:8)
   3. Christians are aware of the truth that whatsoever a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. (Prov 23:7) If we think unclean and impure thoughts which

pornography will produce, we will become unclean and impure.

B. Paul lists the works of the flesh that will keep one out of the kingdom of God. The first four are fornication, adultery, uncleanness, and lasciviousness. All four of these words condemn the use of pornography. Lasciviousness is a word that denotes sinful behavior that is engaged in openly and with no shame. This describes pornography to a T.

C. Christians are to abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thess 5:22) This includes pornography.

D. Christians are to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Col 3:17) Can one read pornography in the name of Christ?

E. "Whether therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor 10:31) Can one read pornography to the glory of God?

F. The people of God are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. We are to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. (Titus 2:12) Peter said that we are to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. (I Pet 2:11) Fornication and uncleanness are not once to be named among the saints of God. We are to have no fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness. (Eph 5:3, 11) In view of these verses can a Christian use pornography?

G. Those who are pure in heart shall see God. (Psm 24:4, Mt 5:8) The unclean shall not enter into heaven. (Rev 21:27) Pornography pollutes the heart, it does not purify.

H. James sums up the Biblical view of something like pornography by saying, "Each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his lusts and enticed. Then lust when it hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finshed, bringeth forth death." (Jas 1:14–15)

Con: In summation let us say, sow a thought, reap an act, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character, sow a character, reap a destiny.

Gambling

Intro: 1. Gambling has been defined as, "to play a game for money or stake, to hazard, to risk what is yours to get something that belongs to another with nothing given in return."

2. Gambling can take many forms. Matching coins for cokes, pitching pennies, cards, dice, sweepstakes, slot machines, roulette wheels, cake walks, betting on games or elections.
3. Someone has suggested that any bet or wager, no matter how small or insignificant, where the outcome is uncertain, where the outcome depends on chance or skill is gambling. I tend to agree.
4. Gambling is as old as man I suppose. The Greeks had knucklebones made of the hooves of sheep, goats, and calves. They had numbers painted on them and were nothing more than dice.
5. The Egyptians had knucklebones. Some were made of glass and shell.
6. Gameboards were found in Crete that were made of gold, silver, crystal, and ivory.
7. The Babylonians used headless arrows to wager.
8. The Romans loved racetracks and lotteries.
9. In Mt 27:35 the soldiers who crucified Christ cast lots for his garmets.
10. It is estimated that fifty billion dollars will be spent on gambling in 1980 in America!

I Arguments In Favor Of Gambling

A. Gambling is entertainment. It is healthy fun. Not so! It feeds the treasury of the underworld! Ten to twelve billion dollars a year is made by organized crime.

B. Gambling we are told is instinctive. It is natural. You might as well allow it under controlled conditions. People are going to gamble anyway. Well we can use that same argument on adultery. Many argue that it is the natural thing to do. People are going to do it. Does that make adultery okay? We know better!

C. Others argue that it will bring in much needed revenue for the state. Not so. It will cost the states.

D. Gambling is used in the religious world to raise money for the churches. Yet, the end does not justify the means. God did not authorize bingo, bazzars, lotteries, and cake walks. God's only method for raising the money the church needs is found in I Corinthians 16:1–2. "As I gave order unto the churches of Galatia, even so do ye, upon the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by him in store, as he hath prospered, that there be no gatherings when I come."

E. We are told that everything in life is a gamble. Life is filled with risks and dangers. Take the farmer we are told. He is a gambler. Yes the farmer takes large but calculated risks. He invests in his land. He plants his crop and waits for the harvest. The risks the farmer takes are not evil. They are for the purpose of producing goods that are beneficial to man. He doesn't try to get something for nothing like the gambler and that is the difference between them. The gambler creates an unnecessary risk. It may be that the farmer or anyone may suffer loss in this life. At least it won't be based on a chance roll of the dice!

F. Some argue that you can read about the casting of lots in the Bible. That is gambling they say. Lots were cast for the assignment of the land in Canaan. (Num 26:55) Lots were cast for office rotation. (I Chron 24:5) They were used to identify those who broke the law. (Jon 1:7) The casting of lots was used to select a new Apostle. (Acts 1:26) The casting of lots was not a form of gambling among the people of God. It was God's method of making his choices known. (Prov 16:33)

II The Bible and Gambling

A. It is true that the word gambling is not found in the Bible. Neither are words like euthanasia, homosexuality, rape, or larceny. The Bible does not contain a listing of every conceivable sin. It does provide us with principles that can be used to determine whether something is right or wrong.

B. Gambling violates the Biblical teaching concerning work.

1. God put Adam into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. (Gen 2:15) Adam did not simply lay around!
2. After Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, God cursed man. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return to the dust, out of it wast thou taken, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen 3:19) Man was later told to do all his work in six days. (Ex 20:9)
3. "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have wherewith to give to him that is in need." (Eph 4:28)
4. If a man will not work, neither let him eat. (II Thess 3:10) See also Prov 22:29

C. Gambling is forbidden by the Biblical teaching concerning theft. In Ex 20:15 and Rom 13:9 God said, "Thou shalt not steal."

1. Theft has been defined as to take one's property by stealth, cunning, or trickery.
2. If gambling is not linked to that definition, I don't understand what is involved in gambling.

D. The principle of stewardship in the Bible forbids gambling. A steward is one who uses that which belongs to his master for the benefit of his master. Christians are stewards. Paul for example said that we are stewards of the gospel. (I Cor 4:1) Stewards must be found faithful for they shall give an account. (I Cor 4:2, Mt 25:14–30)

1. Eveything we have belongs to God.
2. The earth is Jehovah's and the fullness thereof, and all they that dwell therein. (Psm 24:1)
3. Every beast of the forest is mine and the cattle on a thousand hills. (Psm 50:10) The silver and gold belong to God. (Hag 2:8)
4. In him we live and move and have our being. He giveth to all life and breath and all things. (Acts 17:25–28)
5. We have nothing that we were not given by God. It all belongs to him. Will we then gamble it away? Do we have the right to engage it in unnecessary risk? Do we have the right to take it away from our fellow men without giving anything back in return? No! The gamblers will have to give an account to Jesus their master one day.

E. Gambling is wrong because it promotes materialism.
   1. Christians are not to be laying up for themselves treasures on earth. We are concerned with spiritual riches. (I Cor 6:19–21)
   2. Christians must serve God or mammon. The Bible is clear as to what our choice must be. (Mt 6:24–33) We must seek first the kingdom of God.
   3. Jesus asked, "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and loose his own soul? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mt 16:26)
   4. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. (Lk 12:15)
   5. We are to set our minds on things that are above. (Col 3:1–2)
   6. The love of money is a root of evil. Some are led astray from the faith because of it. (I Tim 6:10)
   7. If we love the world, we loose the love of the Father. (I Jno 2:15–17)

F. Gambling is wrong because it is addictive. Paul said that he would not be brought under bondage by anything. (I Cor 6:12) Those who sin are the bondservants of sin. (Jno 8:34) Christians are to be a people of self control. (Gal 5:23, II Pet 1:6) Gambling is as addictive as alcohol. There is an organization known as Gambler's Anonomyous!

G. Gambling breeds dishonesty. Many gamblers steal to cover their losses. In Reno, Neveda seventy-five percent of the casses of embezzelment are linked to gambling debts. Think of all the lying that goes on in an effort to hide gambling debts. Christians are to provide things honestly in the sight of all men. (Rom 12:17)

H. Gambling has been a major home wrecker. Think of the divorces because of gambling. Think of the innocent children who have done without the basic necessities of life because of gambling. Those who care not for their own are worse than infidels. (I Tim 5:8)

I. Consider now some general principles that condemn gambling.
   1. Gambling puts a bushel over one's light. (Mt 5:16)
   2. Gambling violates the golden rule. (Mt 7:12)
   3. Christians are to abhor evil. (Rom 12:9)
   4. Can one gamble to the glory of God? (I Cor 10:31–32)
   5. Can one gamble in the name of Jesus? (Col 3:17)
   6. Christians are to abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thess 5:22)

Con: In summation, will gambling make our influence better or worse? Are the results of gambling desirable? Does gambling quench my moral and spiritual stamina? Will it honor or dishonor my family? Would I like for my fellow Christians to know of my gambling? Does the Bible uphold gambling or condemn it? Will gambling get me closer to heaven?

Capital Punishment

Intro: 1. Crime is costing the American taxpayer two billion dollars a year!
2. In the last ten years violent crimes have risen 147%. Murders are up 129%. Assaults are up 139%.
3. A serious crime happens in America every three to five seconds. A robbery takes place every eighty-three seconds. Someone is murdered every twenty-seven minutes.
4. What is the answer to rising crime? Capital punishment. But the Supreme Court says that capital punishment is unconstitutional. We are told by them that it violates the criminal's civil rights.
5. What does the Bible say about capital punishment?

I The Old Testament and Capital Punishment

A. Before the flood

1. In Gen 4:10 God told Cain that the voice of his brother's blood was crying unto him from the ground. Justice was demanded. In Rev 6:9–10 we read of souls that were slain. They cried out, how long, O Master, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?
2. Cain said, whosoever findeth me shall slay me. God pronounced a curse on anyone who would slay Cain. (Gen 4:14–15)
3. We do not know too much about life in this early Patriarchal period. Apparently there was a law in effect that demanded life for life. Where did they get this law? I believe that God gave it to them.

B. After the flood the Bible says, "whosoever shall shed man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man."

C. Now let's go to the laws of Moses. The following crimes were punsihed by death.

1. Murder-Num 35:30, Ex 21:12

2. Perjury where another man's life was endangered Deut 19:16–21
3. Smiting, cursing, disobeying, rebelling against parents Ex 21:15, 17, Deut 21:18–20
4. Man stealing Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7
5. Adultery and incest Lev 20:10–21
6. Witchcraft or sorcery Ex 22:18
7. Idolatry Deut 17:2–6
8. Sabbath breaking Ex 31:14–15
9. Rape Deut 22:25–27
10. Disobeying authority Deut 17:12–13

D. Forms of execution
1. Stoning Lev 20:2
2. Sword Deut 13:15
3. Burning Lev 21:9
4. Hanging Deut 21:22

II The New Testament and Capital Punishment

A. Jesus made some statements that referred to his belief that government had the God given right to carry out capital punishment.

1. Mt 5:22
    a. Judgment and the council refer to Jewish courts. The council is the Sanhedrin. It had the power to execute vilators of the law.
    b. Hell is the ultimate form of capital punishment.
2. Standing before Pilate, Jesus was asked, "Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have the power to crucify thee or release thee? Jesus did not deny that Pilate had the power to order and carry out capital punishment. He said to Pilate, "... thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above ..." (Jno 19:10–11)

B. Paul stood before Festus and offered his defense. In Acts 25:11 Paul said, "If I be an offender or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die ..." Paul did not argue with Festus' right to execute those who were offenders. Remember Paul was speaking with God's guidance. (Mt 10:16–20)

C. Paul made it crystal clear that God ordained civil government and capital punishment.
   1. Rom 13:1 says, "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained of God."
   2. Rom 13:4 states, "For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

III Arguments Against Capital Punishment

A. Many argue that the Bible teaches non-relaliation. They turn to verses like:
   1. Mt 5:38–39
   2. Rom 12:19

B. These verses teach non-retaliation to individuals but not unto government. The government has the right to send men to punish evil doers. (I Pet 2:13–14)

C. Others contend that capital punishment is not a deterent to crime. Just ask any criminal, they say. Does it make any sense for criminals to argue for capital punishment? The real proof of its power to deter can be seen not in criminals but in the lives of those who were restrained from crime because of the possibility to being executed. Admittedly this is hard to measure but capital punishment is a deterent. God said it was! In Deuteronomy 13:10–11 God told Israel to stone idolaters. Do so in the presence of all Israel. Do so that they may see and hear. Then they will not engage in this wickedness. See also Deut 21:21.

D. Some turn to John 8:1:11. Here a woman taken in adultery is brought before Jesus. He did not recommend the death penalty. Thus, they conclude that Christ was against it. Not so.
   1. Under Old Testament law both parties must be

brought before Israel. If convicted then they were stoned to death. (Lev 20:18) Only one of the parties was brought to Jesus.

2. Furthermore, there had to be at least two witnesses. There were none in the final analysis.
3. Thus, Jesus could not condemn her to death without violating the laws of Moses himself!

E. Some say, well, the laws of Moses have been taken out of the way, therefore, we should not practice capital punishment. Yet, long before the laws of Moses, God decreed that it must be. (Gen 9:6)

F. Others turn to Exodus 20:13 which says, thou shalt not kill. They say this makes capital punishment wrong. The text literally reads, "thou shalt do no murder." There is a great deal of difference between pre-meditated, cold-blooded murder and taking life in order to enforce the laws and protect the general welfare of society.

G. We need to rehabilitate criminals. Well that would be fine if it could be done. But what if you can't? Most who are released from prison return to crime.

H. Capital punishment is cruel, inhumane, and immoral, we are told. Is God cruel, inhumane, and immoral? After all, he instituted civil government and capital punishment!

I. In our defense, let us state that we are not defending some of its abuses. We realize that there have been some miscarriages of justice.

Con: In conclusion, let us not forget that God ordained three institutions. They are their home, civil government, and the church. God has made provision to exercise discipline in each for the purpose of enabling them to function as God designed them. In the home, children are to be disciplined. If a parent spares the rod, he hates his child. (Prov 13:24) Erring Christians, who do not repent are to be withdrawn from. (II Thess 3:6) Those who violate the laws of the land must pay the price. Ezra 7:26 states some principles that need to be emblazoned all across our nation. "Whosoever doeth not the laws of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or imprisonment."

The ultimate form of capital punishment is hell or spiritual death. (Ezk 18:20, Rom 6:23, 8:6.)

Social Drinking

Intro: 1. Historians tell us that alcoholism is one of the major reasons why nineteen out of the last twenty-one civilizations have fallen.

2. Alcoholism is the number one drug problem in America. One doctor said, "Alcohol is a habit forming drug that is accepted in moderate form." Think about this statement. It is profound for alcoholism is having a profound effect upon our nation!
3. Alcoholism is the number four health problem in this nation. Only cancer, heart disease, and mental illness are more widespread and devastating. Alcohol is related to heart disease. It has been linked to cancer of the mouth and larynx. It destroys brain cells. It affects the cardio-vascular system by placing fatty deposits around the heart. It has a disturbing effect on the gastro-intestinal tract. Alcohol lowers the body temperature. There are sixty known diseases that have been linked directly or indirectly to alcohol.
4. Alcohol is costing the American economy fifteen billion dollars a year.
5. It costs the welfare system of our nation some two and a half billion dollars a year.
6. Fifty percent of all crime is alcohol related. One half

of all murders and one third of all suicides are alcohol related.

7. It is a major cause of divorce.
8. It is a major killer on our highways. One out of every fifty drivers on our highways are dead drunk!
9. A few years ago it was said that there were 482,000 whiskey stores and 437,000 church and school buildings in America! Is it worse today! Probably so.

I Arguments For Drinking

A. Some say the Bible condemns drunkenness but not social or moderate drinking. There are one hundred and five million social drinkers in America. Many of them assume that they can engage in moderate drinking with God's approval. Would stealing be acceptable if it was done moderately? What about adultery, lying, cheating, and murder? We know the answer. Why can't we use the same logic with alcohol? Drunkenness is simply a matter of degree. If you drink one can of beer, you are one can of beer drunk. If a man is drunk after twelve beers, which beer made him drunk?

B. Some argue that it is the socially accepted thing to drink. It is also the socially accepted thing to engage in homosexuality. But does that make it right just because society approves? We know better. Exodus 23:2 says, thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil. That is good advice for today's world.

C. Others claim that alcohol is an aid to digestion. Not so. It is an irritant to the gastro-intestinal tract.

D. Many take a drink to warm up. Alcohol dialates the blood vessels and allows heat to escape the body. Many drunk people are often found frozen to death.

E. Drinking makes one more sociable. Does one become more sociable when he looses his judgment, emotions, and morals? The truth of the matter is that alcohol makes a fool out its consumers.

F. Alcoholism is a sickness. If so, how does this disease spread? Does it spread by germs? Is it caused by a virus?

We know better than this. This argument is an insult to our intelligence. Alcoholism is a sin not a sickness!

G. Someone argues that Jesus turned water into wine, therefore, it should not be wrong to drink a little wine. (John 2:1–11) This argument assumes that the wine was fermented. The text does not say so. Others suggest that the "Best wine" of verse ten means fermented wine. No, not so. The best wine was non-fermented wine. Fermented wine was used in the worship of idols in the pagan temples of Jesus' day. Men under thirty could not drink of it and women could never partake of it. Are we to assume that the standards of Christ and the Jews were lower than those of paganism? God forbid!

There were several methods used to keep the wine from fermentation. They boiled the grape juice called mustum, into a thick jelly-like substance called defrutum. This was placed in stone jars and sealed. It was taken out and diluted with water and spices. There was also the burial method. The grape juice was placed in a bottle. It was corked and sealed with pitch. Then it was placed in a pond or buried in the ground for thirty days. The Jews also filtered their grape juice. The yeast that causes the fermentation is found on the skin of the grape. The skin and pulp of the grape were filtered from the juice.

H. In I Timothy 5:23 Paul told Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." Some find an excuse to social drink from this text. The "wine" of this text was a thick unfermented syrup that was to be taken with a spoon. It was often mixed with water. Apparently Timothy was not in the habit of drinking wine. Paul had to make this suggestion to get him to partake of it even in medicinal form. Note also that he said take a "little" wine.

I. Paul in Eph 5:18 wrote, "And be not drunken with wine, where in is excess (riot) ..." Some reason that you can drink if you do not get drunk. The Bible they say teaches only against excess. Yet, we need to know that the word "excess or riot" does not refer to the amount but to a state!

J. Many point the Jesus' institution of the Lord's Supper. They say, Jesus used wine and expects us to do so, when we have communion. (Matthew 26:17–30) The Lord's Supper was instituted during the Passover feast. During this feast there was to be no leaven found in the houses. Souls that did not observe this were to be cut off from all Israel. (Exodus 12:15) Thus, there was unleavened bread and the cup which could not be fermented because yeast or leaven causes fermentation in the wine!

K. People often turn to the qualifications for elders and say that elders are "not to be given too much wine." Thus, they can have some wine. The Bible they say, simply condemns excessive consumption. (I Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7) The term translated "much wine" is "paroinos." It means, "that one is not to be found along side of wine. It means, that one is not to have the habit of drinking wine. It also refers to those who are accustomed to sitting with those who indulge in the drinking of wine." Thus, it totally forbids the drinking of any amount of wine among the eldership.

II The Bible and Drinking

A. In Genesis 9:21–25 Noah got drunk. Ham saw his nakedness and was cursed.

B. In Genesis 19:30–38 we are told that Lot was drunk and his daughters involved him in adultery, incest, and illigetimacy.

C. Priests were not to drink and then enter into the tabernacle. God expected them to be different. (Leviticus 10:8–10) Christians are priests. (I Peter 2:5, 9)

D. Wine is a mocker. Those deceived thereby are not wise. (Proverbs 20:1)

E. The drunkard and glutton will come to poverty. (Proverbs 23:20–21)

F. Solomon asked, "Who hath sorrow? Who hath woe? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at wine."

G. Wine will bite like a serpent and sting like an adder. Serpents such as Coral snakes, Cobras, and Cottonmouths chew their victims. They inject a neurotoxin. This is a nerve poison. Adders or vipers such as the rattlesnake inject a hematoxin. This is a blood poison. Neurotoxin and hematoxin are found in alcohol! (Proverbs 23:31–31)

H. Drinking will cause one to err, to go out of the way, and stumble in judgment. (Isaiah 28:7)

I. John the Baptist did not drink. (Luke 1:13–15)

J. Paul wrote, "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying." (Romans 13:13) In Romans 14:21 the Apostles said, "It is good neither to eat flesh, or drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth."

K. Among the works of the flesh that will keep one out of the kingdom of heaven is drunkenness. (Galatians 5:19–21)

L. Christians are to keep no company with any brother that is given over to drunkenness. (I Corinthians 5:11)

M. Christians are to glorify God in their bodies. Drinking hinders the fulfillment of this obligation. (I Corinthians 6:19–20)

N. Christians are to glorify God in all that they do. (I Corinthians 10:31) Can we drink even moderately to the glory of God?

O. Christians are to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Colossians 3:17) We are to abhor (actively hate and oppose) evil. (Romans 12:9) We are to possess our vessels (bodies) in honor and sanctification. (I Thessalonians 4:3–4) Can we do this while harming them by consuming alcohol? Christians are to have no fellowship with works of darkness. (Ephesians 5:11)

Con: Alcoholics anonymous says that the first step to becoming an alcoholic is taking that first drink. This ought to be enough to stop social drinking. Can't we learn from other nations? West Germany has a population that is twenty-five percent alcoholic! In France someone dies every thirty minutes from alcoholism.

Alcohol promises to be a friend but it is a foe. It promises liberty but gives slavery. It promises gain but brings only loss.

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